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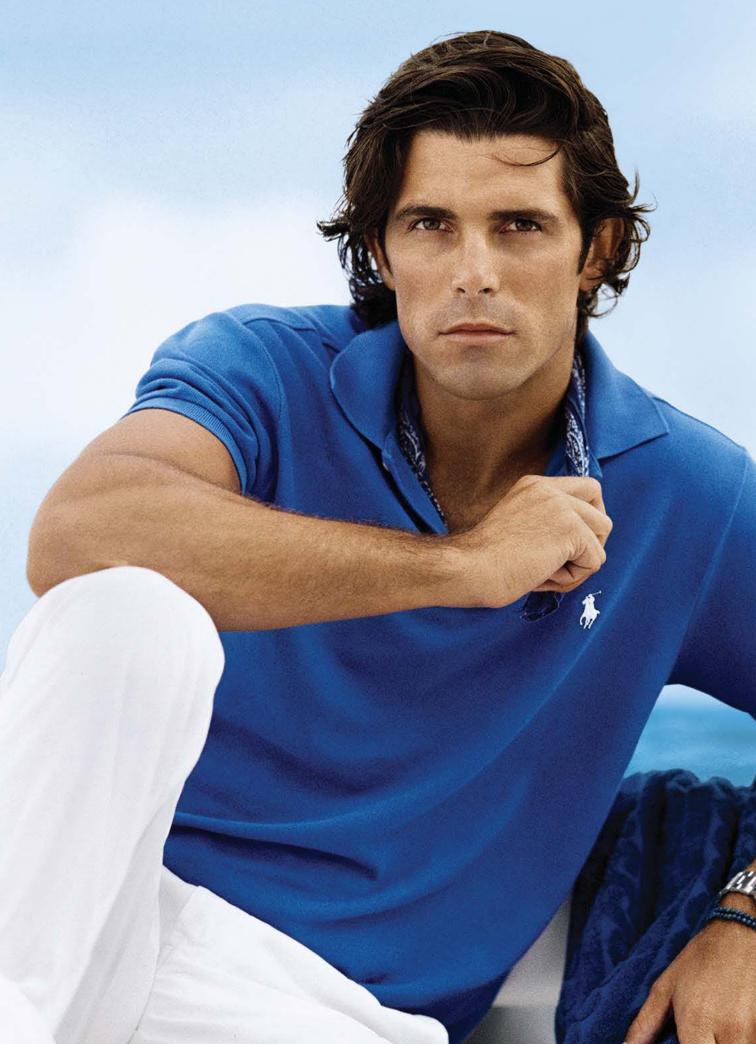
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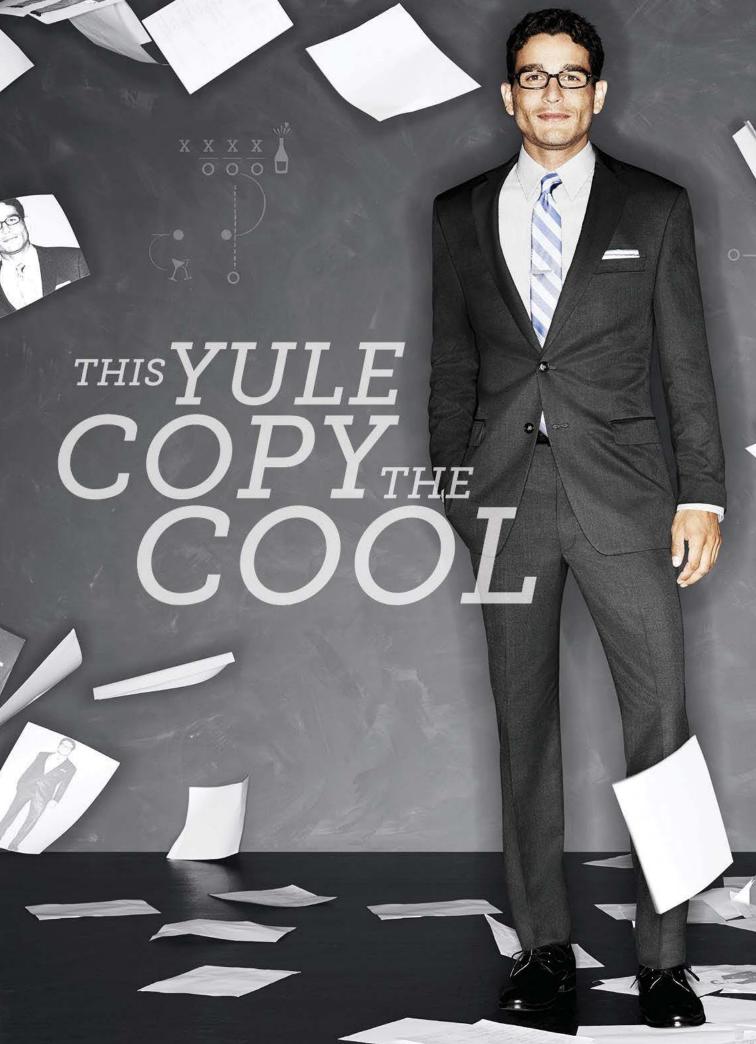


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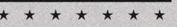
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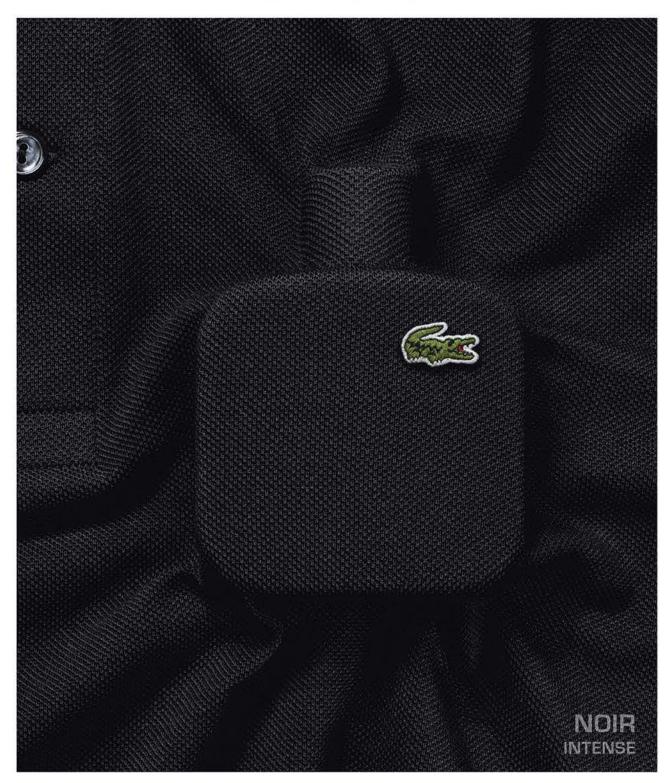




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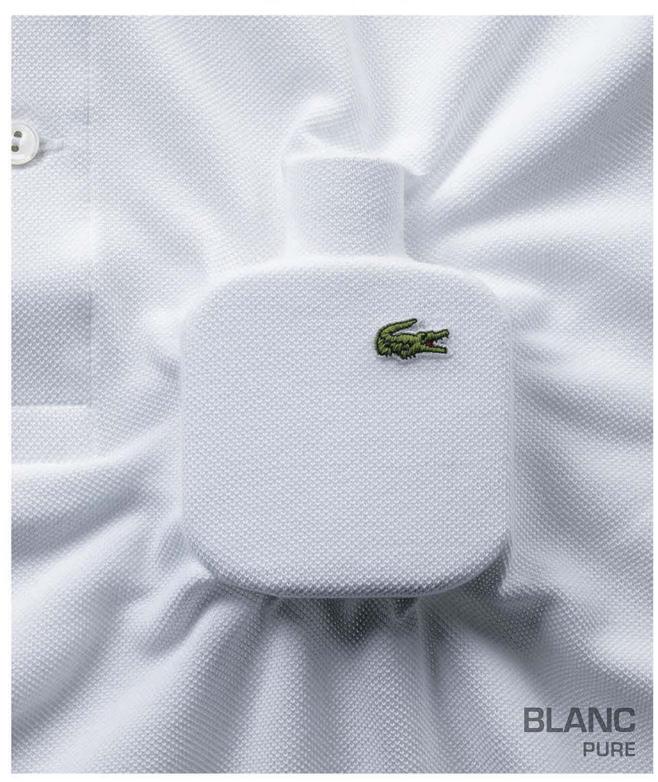




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> differently. BY TOM JUNOD

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... begins in March, with the launch of the most ambitious manned space mission in years. BY CHRIS JONES

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ESQUIRE STYLE

A Manhattan bar crawl with a few good men who have had one great year.

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ADDITIONALLY...

HOW TO RAISE ASTRONAUTS

Richard and the late
Patricia Kelly are the only
parents to raise astronaut
siblings, identical twin
brothers Mark and Scott.
When Scott rockets to the
space station in March for
the first one-year mission in
American history (see story
on page 144), Richard Kelly
will witness a record eighth
launch of a son into space.
The author of our story,
Chris Jones, explains how
he and Patricia did it:



RAISE ADULTS, NOT CHILDREN:

Their boys were given free physical rein and frequently did damage to themselves and each other. "The hospital knew us," Richard says. One summer, when Mark and Scott were teenagers (above), Richard sent them to live on a boat 80 miles from home. He gave them just enough grocery money not to starve; if they wanted to eat properly, they had to learn to live off the ocean, frying up clam fritters for breakfast. That boat was

CONTINUED



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■CONTINUED

the first in a lifelong series of ships.

NEVERSAY NO (JUST "YES, BUT..."):

When the boys were five or six, Richard overheard them planning to run away. (Patricia had been reading them Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.) Richard got them two sticks, two kerchiefs, and two peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwiches. They just weren't allowed to cross the street. "So they could run away from home within a one-block area," Richard says.

LEAD BY EXAMPLE: Richard was a police captain. Patricia wanted to join the force. But recruits had to run an obstacle course that included scaling a seven-foot-fourinch wall, which was too difficult for most. Richard built a seven-foot-five-inch wall, and the boys saw Patricia's determination. She did it. **NEVER STOP:** "People tell me, 'Your sons did great,'" Richard says. "I say, 'Wait a

done vet."

minute. Did? They're not

THE ESQUIRE REGISTER: '80s EDITION

We originally ran the Esquire Register from 1984 to 1989. Looking back, turns out some of those kids did all right for themselves.



BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN: Singer/ songwriter/workingman's hero, 1985 "Through his songs' com-

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FUNNY JOKE FROM A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

BY EMILY WICKERSHAM



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An exhaustive dayby-day guide to eating the whole ham.

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MAINTENANCE

The old-school grooming supplies good enough for your granddad are good enough for you.

PAGE

STEPHEN MARCHE... on drugs.

PAGE

THIS WAY OUT

Morals of children's stories. BY A. J. JACOBS



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CONTINUED

plex little beauties and surprises, he dignifies small feelings with the gravity of real emotion, defines innocence in terms new to it, makes rote gestures seem heartbreaking, and gives a voice of consequence to the unlistened to."

WILLIAM CLINTON, HILLARY RODHAM

CLINTON: Governor; attorney, 1984

"By marking improved education as a top priority, the Clintons...have persuaded the state legislature to pass a host of new education bills."

OPRAH WINFREY: Media magnate/talk-show host. 1989 "Oprah has made no secret of her hard-knocks childhood. If that made her an accessible, touchy-feely talkshow host, it also made her a realist."



STEVENJOBS: Cofounder and former director of Apple, founder of NeXT, Inc., 1986 "Even as Silicon Valley represents the apotheosis of the modern work ethic to the rest of the country, there are people within the Valley who represent it in even purer form to those already here. There are monks among the priests. There is Steven P. Jobs."



THE ESQUIRE

Peretti, a comedian and star of *Brooklyn* Nine-Nine, missed the age cutoff (35) for the Esquire Register by just one year, so we asked her to weigh in on the issue.

STYLE (PAGE 67)

It's amazing how much more practical information is present in men's magazines than in women's. Women's magazines are all "How to Flirt Like a Parisian in the Marais" and "Identify the Right Shade of Rose for Your Cheekbone Highlighter!" When you're done reading, you're left with abstract insecurity. But guys reading Esquire can be like, "Okay, I now know how to protect myself from the elements as I navigate the world."

"ANGELINA" (PAGE 46)

Did she transform from a sex symbol into an activist, or can she possibly embody multiple things at once? Can a political person who wrote about her double mastectomy still be a sex symbol? These aren't rhetorical questions; I really don't know the

answer, because I'm not sure how "sex symbol" is defined. Hopefully, it could include a human dimension. It's cool to see her evolution through your time-lapsed interviews. Hove her drive to do something "practical" and helpful in the world and her commitment to health and motherhood. She definitely changed the mold of the Hollywood actress for the better. Most females seem to inherently like her. I am no different.

"A TACTICAL GUIDE FOR THE HOLIDAYS" (PAGE 58)

I was hoping this would be useful. I guess I'll just watch Bad Santa again and pray?

"THE ESOUIRE REGISTER 2014" (PAGE 129)

It seems weird to publish a list informing readers that Beyoncé, a bunch of movie stars, and Zuckerberg are influentialno disrespect to the god Seth Rogen (who, full disclosure, is one of my closest friends in Hollywood). Maybe because I'm an entertainer surrounded by like-minded narcissists, I was most interested in the behind-the-scenes influencers who quietly change people's lives through functional things they use every day (like Nest and Airbnb). Military skepticism was also interesting to think about. And Humans of New York. I feel like I need to read a lot more about Snowden, but it's crazy that the FBI is on all his calls. I guess he doesn't do a ton of phone sex. He should do lots of crank calls to try to get the FBI to crack up! My final thought is why not do a list of influencers over 65?

"THE MILLENNIUM AT 15" (PAGE 128)

I would retitle this "21st-Century Thing About Audacity of Techno-Optimism." As a devotee of the Internet, this is the most extensive long-form reading I have done since college. I have a couple words for you that are appropriate to exemplify the generation in the Register: "hella techy." I'm not sure social media is the big ol' party you make it out to be (i.e., block function and trending of cruel things and crises), but I do love this focus on the bonds the Internet has forged rather than the disconnection. And I love Brandon Stanton's point about the Internet providing an equal platform and access point for different voices. "A democracy that works" is such a provocative description, yet I don't want to give up on real-world things. I don't want my whole life to be on a laptop.

POSSIBLE TOPICS OF NOTE FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN MILLENNIALS

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ADVICE FROM A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

Emily Wickersham, NCIS's newest agent, has some advice about choosing gifts for the woman in your life. Find her tips by using the Esquire iPad app, going to esquire.com/ wickersham, or scanning here with the Esquire2 app.

THE SOUND & THE FURY



THE ESQUIRE MENTORING INITIATIVE

Dedicated to mentoring, our

October issue profiled 50 influential men who shared their stories about the people who made them, featured 89 mentorship organizations, and enlisted three ad agencies to revolutionize how men view mentoring. But that's not the end of it. We've committed to

enlisting 100,000 mentors by 2020. Visit mentoring. esquire.com to get involved and share your stories.

I've been following with interest your coverage of the challenges facing boys in America. I see it every time I go downtown. The

CONTEXT-WON'T BE RUNNING

"I'm faced with mine own inner madness. Once, I posted a signup list seeking volunteers for a lunar penal colony. The list looked official (the fine print excluded arsonists and chronic masturbators) and several signed up. I'd go."

number of homeless young men here amazes me. Before reading your articles, I was at a loss to explain it. I applaud your effort to do something about this. I hope I'll learn something or find a group I can help that will make a difference.

> Dan Romanchik Ann Arbor, Mich.

I don't think picking up a magazine has ever had such a profound effect on me as it did today. I have posted the story of my mentor on mentoring. esquire.com.

> ROB GLAUS San Diego, Calif.

There's something to mentoring that lets you share in the dream of another, to get wrapped up in believing, to invest your heart and time and talents in seeing a dream that wasn't your dream come to fruition. Having something to believe in is powerful stuff. It can change the mentor as much as the kid. Thanks for always aspiring to be better than just a bunch of smart, challenging words on glossy paper.

> MIKE WALSH Wayne, Pa.

Thank you for taking on the issue of mentoring in such a bold way. After having been a mentor with other organizations, I took a friend up on his challenge (though I think he was mostly joking) that I should have my own mentoring organization. In May of 2013, I started a nonprofit called Kids in the Woods Initiative (K.I.W.I.) in Toronto. We are dedicated to reconnecting kids to nature through outdooradventure CONTINUED



Blow off steam at work by watching Brawlers on the new astoundingly high-res iMac with Retina 5K display (\$2,500).

THIS MONTH ON THE ESQUIRE NETWORK

THREE MINUTES WITH A BOXING TRAINER

INTHE SECOND SEASON of White Collar Brawlers (Tuesdays at 10:00 P.M.), coworkers and rivals learn to box for ten weeks, after which they pummel one another to settle differences. Trainers like James "Country" Thornwell turn them into fighters. Here's a preview of your first moments in training with Country.

- > You've got to ask yourself, Why are you here? I see guys getting into boxing because they want to box their friends or foes. They want to put the gloves on and go in there, and it goes nowhere. Nowhere but home. It takes three to five months before you're ready for the ring.
- > If you're committed, then you have to ask yourself what kind of fighter you want to be. There are three types: First are those who just want to know how to punch. Sec-
- ond are the white-collar weekend warriors—they come in and train a couple hours a day, then maybe do a weekend tournament. And third are the guys who want to go pro. If you want to be the next Floyd Mayweather, then you practice six to eight hours a day.
- > First, we're going to work your feet. When you build a house, you build from the basement up. If a trainer doesn't start you out by working your feet, get a different one. Everyone just
- wants to see the hands fly, but it's more than that. Once you're conditioned, then you'll learn how to jab.
- > Once you know how to box, you'll learn how to maneuver for three-minute rounds. You can't go into the first round and shoot your load. When you know how to move around, how to adjust, how to kill time, how to look like you're doing something when you're really not doing anything-that's when you can finally say you're a fighter.



EMPORIO ARMANI

SWISS MADE





HAM ADVICE FROM RESIDENT FOOD PREPPER JESSIE KISSINGER

In honor of this month's Eat Like a Man column (page 52), some tips: 1. Australians make the best YouTube ham-carving videos. 2. There are no definitive rules for how to carve a ham. Regardless of how you do it, by the end it will look like a dead whale attacked by sharks.

CONTINUED

play (think Huck Finn) and mentoring. And as Tom Chiarella discovered in his charming essay "The Wisdom of Boys," there is much to be learned from the ones we presume to help. I hope other men (and women) will take up your call to help build good men. Now you just need 99,997 more.

Mark Yearwood Founder & Executive Director Kids in the Woods Initiative Toronto, Canada

"If they know you're sad, they'll only be calling because you're sad. No one wants a sad call." This advice, from eight-year-old Cam in "The Wisdom of Boys," stunned this World War II-era geezer with a couple university degrees.

BILL HAHN Park Ridge, Ill.

I love Esquire for teaching us that in a world where faux manliness is determined by one's facial hair or the fabricated celebra-

tion of fighting large carnivores, the first rule of building a man (the role, not the gender) is that a man be mentored into existence.

> ZACH SMITH Springfield, Mo.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

may be e-mailed to editor@ esquire.com. Include your full name and address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

CONTEXT-WON'T BE RUNNING

"Telegrams are still a thing STOP. Crafting story re: man who spent life building castle by hand STOP. Need \$73 for gas, weed, and pudding cups STOP."

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MAILER ON **ESQUIRE**

Norman Mailer had a famously bitter relationship with Esquire. Selected Letters of Norman Mailer, featured in this month's Books column (page 44), includes letters to Esquire in which he complains about matters like changed headlines and "birdshit" payment. (We looked at the invoices and were actually surprised at just how high the rates were.) Here's a note he sent to editor in chief Harold Hayes in 1970:

Dear Harold. About a year ago, some kid who started to work for Esquire came over to me and suggested I do a piece for Esquire on Fidel Castro and I said, "Do you know what would happen? I would spend two months getting ready to do the piece and then a lot of time in Cuba. and then I would work at writing the piece for another few months and maybe it would be the best thing I'd ever done, and then Esquire would print a picture of Fidel Castro on the cover with Richard Nixon's asshole installed on his forehead." And the kid said, "Do you really think Esquire would do that?" and I said, "Don't you?" Ciao,

Norman Mailer

FASHION WEEK

REVIEW FOCUS ON CANCET

Brooklyn-based menswear label Cadet showed a concise collection of military inspired basics in exciting technical materials at their Fashion Week debut at Esquire's private venue in Tribeca, New York City this past September. Drawing inspiration from military academies of the post-war military academy era, the palette was beautifully somber, featuring granite grey, stone and black, with pops of Cadet blue, aubergine and bright olive, all which looked incredibly fresh for Spring/Summer 2015.



Cadet went on a journey around the world and designed a collection of versatile, comfortable travel-friendly clothes. Suit separates are made out of tropical wool blends and cotton jersey knits, while the classic Cadet Aviator pant gets an upgrade in black leather.



Established in 2011 by Raul Arevalo and Brad Schmidt, CADET is entirely designed and manufactured in the brand's own factory in Bushwick, Brooklyn. CADET provides the highest quality in an ethical way and stays true to the brands DNA to be "Made in the USA."



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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

nazıng

THE STORY GOES THAT WE used to be the country that could face any obstacle and, if not overcome it, at least wrestle it to the ground. But ever since 9/11, the politicians and the pundits and the cheap vendors of conventional wisdom have found that being consumed with the menace of it all is a sure path to ratings or votes.



Why did we panic over the arrival of Ebola here? Because someone gains a political or ratings advantage by mongering dread. The Bush administration mastered this tactic in the wake of 9/11. Let us give up our principles because the threat of Al Qaeda is so all-consuming. Instead of creating an atmosphere in which we became more American by reaffirming our foundational values, we became less so and abandoned many of the attributes—resilience, defiance. hope—that had made us unique.

We have gotten into the habit of reacting to challenges in purely defensive ways. Which is why Tom Junod's and Chris Jones's stories this month are so encouraging to me.

In this issue, we note the simple but startling fact that we are now 15 years into the 21st century. On the surface of things, it's been a pretty terrible decade and a half: September 11, Katrina, wars without end, the Great Recession, and on and on. As we thought about the history of the 21st century, we wondered how the people coming of age during this time have been shaped by such a succession of disasters. We chose 37 people 35 and under to populate what we are calling the Esquire Register-individuals who already have had a significant impact on our culture and whom we expect to continue to exert outsize influence.

And then we asked Tom Junod to talk to as many of them as possible. We decided we didn't want to write about the millennials (as so many pop philosophers endlessly have) so much as listen to what they have to say about the remarkable era they've grown up in ("The Millennium at 15," page 128). I can't tell you how many

times Junod called or wrote to say he just had had the most amazing conversation ever. They were optimistic, he reported. They were giddily so. My fear that this new generation of leaders might have been chastened by the events of the 21st century turned out to be groundless. This made me feel better.

And, just to show that optimism and a commitment to the possible are not limited to those born in 1980 and after, we have Chris Jones's remarkable story ("Away," page 144) about the journey astronaut Scott Kelly will soon embark on. If we are ever actually to go to Mars, the trip there will be close to a year in duration. Space takes a toll on humans. We know that. But to determine just how severehow survivable-a trip to Mars might be, Kelly will soon be the first American to spend a full year in space. His every function will, of course, be monitored, but when he returns, they will be further documented by comparing him with his identical twin, Mark Kelly, a former astronaut and the husband of former congresswoman Gabby Giffords. Just amazing.

There's still a frontier—whether it's out in space or on the laptop of someone with imagination and vision. It's good to know there's still a frontier.

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BY MOVING SIDE TO SIDE SHAVING HAS FINALLY MOVED FORWARD





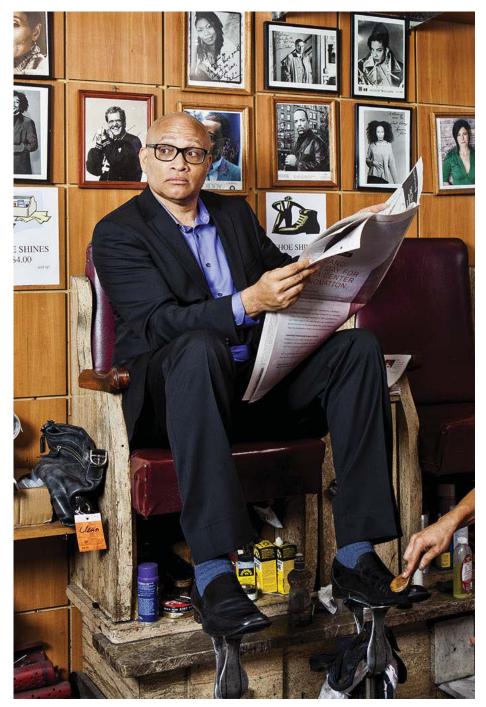


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Man at His Best DECEMBER 2014



ESQ&A

Larry Wilmore

Photograph by Patrick James Miller

Scott Raab meets the producer, writer, outgoing Daily Show "senior black correspondent" on a Monday night at Porter House steakhouse, on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. Wilmore is preparing for the premiere of The Minority Report, which is taking over the Colbert Report slot on Comedy Central.

LARRY WILMORE: Now, my favorite is the porterhouse, but that's a lot of food.

SCOTT RAAB: I'd be happy to go porterhouse with you.
LW: Oh, you don't have to do that....It is my favorite, though.
SR: Well, then, why don't we do that?

LW: Let me ask you this: Do you like it medium-rare?

SR: Yes, I do. LW: Well, then, I think this is

meant to be. **SR:** When do you take over the

11:30 slot?

LW: January 19, Martin

Luther King's birthday, irony intended. Stephen's last day

is December 18. **SR:** You excited?

LW: When you're in the eye of the hurricane, it's a swirl of emotions. We're in the very early stages right now, still figuring out what the show is.

SR: What's it like being a showrunner?

LW: On The Bernie Mac Show, I won every award you could possibly win, worked like a dog—14 hours a day sometimes. And I was fired in the second year. The only reward that showrunners can get is financial—if they're able to stick

CONTINUED

INSIDE: Angelina Jolie, Scandinavian noir, Canadian whisky, and lots and lots of things to do with leftover ham. Also: Norman Mailer.



CONTINUED

around long enough and if your show is successful. [To waiter] I think we're gonna do the porterhouse for two. SR: Do you think about weight?

LW: You always have a performer's vanity. But I have the next few months to get in fightin' shape.

SR: Play sports growing up? LW: Basketball, football, track. SR: And you were on the debate team in high school. LW: You did your homework. When I was on the debate team, I had to go into the library, look through magazines, books, make index cards.

SR: The old 3-by-5's. LW: Wouldn't mess around with that 5-by-7 bullshit.

SR: Private school? LW: Catholic. It was old-school. **SR:** Where in Los Angeles?

LW: Pasadena, San Marino. I grew up in Pomona. And my parents are actually from Chicago.

SR: Evanston.

LW: Correct. And my father... **SR:** Probation officer turned

LW: I should be interviewing you about me.

SR: I even listened to a Terry Gross interview.

LW: My favorite interview, by the way.

SR: I have never heard anyone dance around the *n*-word like that.

LW: Up to now, my favorite interview.

SR: Well, it's early yet. LW: And I didn't have a porter-

house with Terry. **SR:** Are you a churchgoer? LW: Every Sunday. "Recover-

ing Catholic" is my term. **SR:** How does it feel to be the spokesperson for an



With Jon Stewart in April, as the "senior black correspondent" on The Daily Show.

entire race?

LW: If I were to agree with your premise, then I would be exhausted.

SR: But when I listen to interview after interview...

LW: You become a mouthpiece by proxy. But I speak for myself. It's my sense of humor, my point of view. Sometimes you end up being a spokesperson.

SR: Has the racial makeup of writers' rooms changed at all? For so long, there were white writers on black shows.

LW: Whenever I'm doing a show, they say, "Larry, how many black writers do you have?" And I say, "You know, you should ask *Friends* that question. Why are you asking me? I'm the one who does the hiring, you know? I hire the black female director. I'm the one who does that. You guys get that, right?"

The pilot of Black-ish [a sitcom produced by Wilmore and others on ABC] dealt with this theme. Anthony Anderson is promoted to senior vice-president of the "urban division." He says, "Did they

just put me in charge of black stuff?"

SR: Same thing with music. What was once called "race music" is now "urban." LW: The words that are used are very funny to me. One of my favorite bits from my early career was a fake commercial about a product called Black Away, which you could place on the tip of your tongue and it takes the black out of your voice so you could do things like go on job interviews. And it was like, "Say, brothers, are you tired of white people looking at you funny when you talk? Use new Black Away! Yeah, it's revolutionary. New Black Away! Works right in the mouth to remove even the most stubborn colloquial slang!" That's when Def Comedy Jam was starting and I wasn't street enough for all that, so that's what Robert Townsend and Keenen Ivory Wayans were talking about, the same thing. Keenen was a very clean comic in the clubs. He did The Tonight Show earlier in his career. SR: I did not know that.

LW: He wasn't a street type. When I was growing up, black comedy became this type of ghettoized thing, where if you weren't talking about how 'brothers gorilla the pussy," then you weren't gonna get cast in something. When I was a kid, "black comic" meant you checked your intellectualism at the door. It meant you had to be underprivileged. I could root for you because I felt sorry for you. So by being underprivileged and by coming from the ghetto, you could say all these outrageous things about sex and everything, and it's okay because "Oh, well." Whereas I never apologized for doing smart humor. And the live audiences always anpreciated it. But it was Hollywood that didn't understand. And so I started writing, because I knew I had to carve out my own path and learn how to write and produce. I couldn't wait for them to do it. I'd be out of the business by now, you know? And now I see young black comics doing my approach all these years later. You'll see a guy who looks like he might've been a Def Comedy type, but he's doing thoughtful, self-reflective humor. It's come full circle. I was influenced by many different types of black comics who don't fall under one type. Flip Wilson was a vaudevillestyle comic. Bill Cosby's a storyteller. Dick Gregory's a political comic. Godfrey Cambridge was a hipster. Redd Foxx was a blue comic. And then Richard Prvor kind of changed it all up when he started doing his act in the '70s.

SR: He freed a lot of voices. LW: He influenced people in many ways. But the effect on Hollywood was once it starts making money, people want to replicate that. "Oh, this is how black people can make a lot of green for us!"

SR: "I need that Richard Pryor feeling."

LW: And then Eddie Murphy synthesized that in a palatable way for people. Plus, he was so brilliantly funny. He's in a category by himself, Eddie Murphy. But that's why I got into writing.

SR: To write something for vourself.

LW: You gonna eat more meat here?

SR: Yeah, I'm gonna eat more meat.

CONTINUED

THE ESQUIRE DOSSIER

Date of birth: October 30, 1961 Which makes him:

Hometown: Pomona, California Secondary education: Damien High School, an all-male Catholic school Where he was: One of two black students in his class

An experience he says was: Like being "at a family reunion and I wasn't in the

family" Major in college: Theater **Decidedly non**comedic role for which he received academic acco-

lades: Tiresias in

Sophocles'

Preferred term for his ethnicity, according to a 2009 radio interview: "Chocolate" TV writing credits include: The Bernie Mac Show; The Office; In Living Color; The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air; Sister, Sister Other writing credit: A book: I'd Rather We Got Casinos and Other

Black Thoughts

Oedipus Rex

Show with Jon Stewart, 2006-14 On which his title was: Senior black correspondent Standout segments include: "Is Blackface Ever Okay?"; the Wilmore Awards for outstanding achievement in breaking down racial barriers that nobody asked you to break Will that he The Minority Report

with a silent t? No.

Latest gig: The Daily



CONTINUED

LW: I think I'll try a piece on this side.

SR: I don't think we're gonna have any trouble consuming this.

LW: I don't think so.

SR: I'm just being a gentleman. LW: I'm just keeping it real.

SR: You're a low-key guy. Under the radar.

LW: I just interviewed Tyson for this thing at Comic Con last weekend. He's doing a show for Adult Swim called Mike Tyson Mysteries. The boxer, the heavyweight champ, has a different type of charisma in terms of—I'll put it in coarse terms-women's attraction to guys that have juice. SR: Mojo.

LW: Rock stars have the most juice. And then your top-tier politicians are in second. And then your rich businessmen are probably in third. But heavyweight champs are in a class by themselves. The affection for Tyson, the electricity-it's amazing to watch. Muhammad Ali in his heyday? Nothing bigger than that.

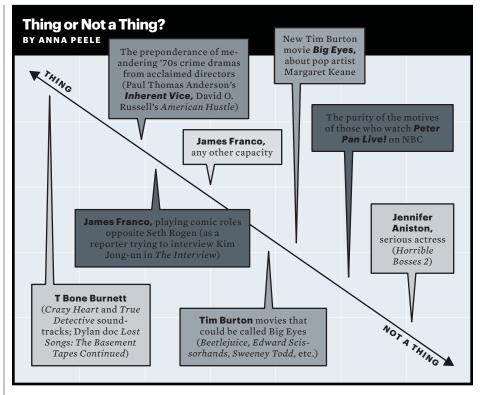
SR: It can get very primal. There's something primitive about it.

LW: It's like there's an uncaged lion in our midst.

SR: The animal thing—while it's always a dangerous comparison—is absolutely right. Is America ready for The Minority Report?

LW: I need to comment on a few things, yeah. This has been the year of race. It's been ridiculous. Why wasn't my show on last January, for chrissakes? You had Donald Sterling leading everybody off. There's so many things going on.

SR: All race, all the time? LW: The theme of it is more of the underdog. And underrepresented voices. So it's not just a black thing. And it's about having a conversation. It's not



me trying to get my opinion across or pushing an agenda on people. I tell people, I say, "I consider myself a passionate centrist." What that means comedically is half the time I disagree with myself. I don't mind learning something in a conversation. It's about discovery. SR: How about Ebola? Seems particularly rich in terms of humor.

LW: People get very scared of anything that's coming from Africa. You got your Africanized killer bees-they're not just killer bees; they're Africanized

SR: Way scarier.

LW: "Oh, there's killer bees coming?" "Oh, okay, I'm cool." "Wait, they're Africanized!" "Motherfucker, let's go."

SR: Why do you follow Ann Coulter on Twitter?

LW: Her books High Crimes and Misdemeanors and Treason are very good, very well-written.

SR: That's what drives people wild, because along with some of the bombs she throws, which are invariably funny to me, she's a smart human being.

LW: She's very smart, and she researches a lot. But the problem is she was talking about race in one of her books and so much of it was so wrong. And one of my phrases is—and I usually use it with sports but I had to use it with her bookslike when a young person is trying to tell me why Magic Johnson isn't as good as whoever and I say, "Here's the problem: You're a researcher, but I'm a witness."

SR: You saw it.

LW: Yeah, you're a researcher, but I'm a witness. People try to tell me that because there were certain laws that were passed that racism was gone, and they use research to try to prove that. They weren't with me when I saw someone write an N on my mom's check. Or cheated me and my brother a certain way. Or. you know, feeling yourself being treated like a second- or third-class citizen all the time. You know, just because a law is changed doesn't mean the culture is changed. And so to use that as your evidence was just very wrong. And that was a huge miss for me, you know?

SR: Ann Coulter went to law school.

LW: It's researched very well. It's just that I'm a witness. Sorry. 12



How Do You Like Your Egypt?

With Ben Kingsley?

a) Who?

b) Do you mean goateed Patrick Stewart? c) Praise him.

With Ben Kingsley as a pharaoh?

a) Huh?

b) Or, damn, is that Ian McKellen?

c) A Brit ruling Egypt

in the time of pharaohs seems just a touch anachronistic.

With an overwhelming sense that you're rewatching **Gladiator?**

a) I like to eat Sour Patch Kids headfirst. But only sometimes. **b)** Gladiator was for

pussies who don't really get darkness.

c) I do enjoy prayer-dependent destruction in a sandy environment.

With some good ol' fashioned **God-fearing?**

a) I am this many years old.

b) Who brought the kid?

c) Praise Him.

KEY:

Mostly a's: Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb

Mostly b's: The Pvramid

Mostly c's: Exodus: Gods and Kings

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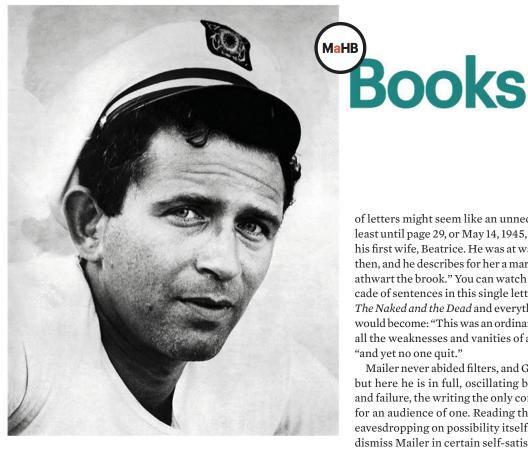
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MAILER, THE MAN

716 revealing letters from a lion of American literature BY CHRIS JONES

Norman Mailer was a boiler-hearted factory. He wrote 44 books and however many essays and stories and, in his spare time, between all the wives and all the children, at least 45,000 letters. In J. Michael Lennon's introduction to Selected Letters of Norman Mailer (Random House, \$40), he estimates Mailer's outgoing mail included more than 20 million words. Just 2 percent of them are in this book, yet it is still as massive as the life they document.

Only last year, Lennon produced a big and loving biography of his friend, Norman Mailer: A Double Life. So this collection

of letters might seem like an unnecessary duplicate, at least until page 29, or May 14, 1945, when Mailer writes his first wife, Beatrice. He was at war in the Philippines then, and he describes for her a march, "a dead Jap lying athwart the brook." You can watch firsthand in the cascade of sentences in this single letter home the birth of The Naked and the Dead and everything else that Mailer would become: "This was an ordinary group of men with all the weaknesses and vanities of any men," he writes, "and yet no one quit."

Mailer never abided filters, and God love him for that, but here he is in full, oscillating between ascendency and failure, the writing the only constant, even if it was for an audience of one. Reading these letters feels like eavesdropping on possibility itself. It's trendy today to dismiss Mailer in certain self-satisfied circles, to write him off as a buffoon and a blowhard and a boor, but those dismissals are made by lesser writers who care more about what their peers think of their judgments than about making anything themselves worth judging. By the end of the first section of letters—they are sorted by decade—it's impossible not to think that Mailer's already done so much, even though you know just how much is left to come.

That's the true value of these letters, especially for young writers who might be looking for the guidance of saints. In reading Mailer's correspondence as the autobiography he never wrote, these 716 pieces of mail provide a kind of map, from the hills and rice paddies of the Philippines through every victory and defeat for the rest of the century and beyond. That sort of gigantism and scope takes industry and ambition and fearlessness. It also requires a lifelong belief in words and what enough of them might do. 12



Our Favorite Books of the Year (Very Briefly)

> The Goldfinch. by Donna Tartt: For the sad part in New York. And the fun part in Vegas. And the exciting part in Amsterdam. For drunk Boris and kind Hobie and Theo, our own 21stcentury Oliver Twist. > & Sons, by David Gilbert: It's about how fathers and sons and brothers can go from "magnets al-

ways aware of the

tua" toward each other to perfectly fked-up strangers. > Fives and Twentyfives, by Michael Pitre: A novel by an Iraq vet about war,

life after war, and a platoon filling boobytrapped potholes. > The key lesson of Walter Kirn's Blood Will Out: Never trust a murdering German immigrant posing as

a Rockefeller.

> We Are Not Ourselves, by Matthew Thomas: A very big American story about a very small American family. > The Noble Hus-

tle: Poker, Beef Jerky and Death, by Colson Whitehead: What happens when a gifted writer of fiction finds a new means of self-expression: cards and how we play them.

> Remember Me Like This, by Bret Anthony Johnston: Multiple narrative perspectives, a singular plot, consummate sadness. What else could you want? > Yes Please, by

Amy Poehler: Like if you cornered her at a party and instead of kneeing you in the groin she gave you good advice and told funny SNL stories.

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-JULES VERNE

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ANGELINA JOLIE HAS BEEN PROFILED IN ESQUIRE THREE TIMES DURING HER 15-YEAR TRANSFORMATION FROM SEX SYMBOL TO DIRECTOR AND ACTIVIST. ON THE OCCASION OF HER SECOND FILM, UNBROKEN (OUT DECEMBER 25), THREE ESQUIRE WRITERS REVISIT JOLIE AS THEY KNEW HER.

1.1998-2000

She was skinny and pale, jittery and raw. Nothing would reassure her. "It's not okay! That's what everybody always tells me, 'It's okay' and 'It doesn't matter,' and <mark>it does</mark> matter."

This was a few months before she beame an international star. Her spectacular performance as a doom-hungry junkie supermodel on HBO's Gia had won the critics, and now she was about to win an Oscar and a mass audience playing another feral renegade in Girl, Interrupted. Off-screen, she'd been a cutter, she had tattoos, she did drugs, she had sex with women as well as men, and she talked about it all. The result was an image of erotic power and recklessness that was almost aggressive: She may have chosen to turn the tools of destruction on herself, but first she took them into her own hands. Acting was another opportunity to throw herself open

to the human being in front of her and let something "break inside" her.

In person, she did just that. She chased her sentences around trees and down holes, following her thoughts with a moment-to-moment intensity that was hard to follow but always achingly sincere. She was kind. She was spacey. She seemed doomed. How much of that was real and how much the kind of roles she was playing then is hard to say. But just before she left, when she described her perfect farmhouse, with big porches and lots of room for all her friends to build tree houses and put on shows, where she could be happy and raise lots and lots of kids, the only rational response seemed to be No! No! No! Don't have lots of kids! Look at yourself! You're a character out of Breathless or Sunset Boulevard or In a Lonely Place or Gia, the heroine of a glorious gloomy movie where everything ends badly!

Then she decided to change the script. -JOHN H. RICHARDSON, "Angelina Jolie and the Torture of FAME," FEBRUARY 2000

2.2001-04

Blessed Art Thou, by Kate Kretz, 2006, oil & acrylic on linen, 88" x 60".

Film/TV

Her hair was long and chestnut, framing her porcelain face. Her lips were wrinkly pillows. She was smaller than imagined, thin and insubstantial.

"I have a fire inside of me that maybe could be a little less. I've gone through two marriages because I couldn't just be at peace and be at home."

Her relationship with the actor Billy Bob Thornton, with its vials of blood and magnetic public displays of affection, was over. Two years earlier, in Cambodia, she'd adopted her first child. "I do believe I have to concentrate on my son," she said. "That's why I have lovers right now and not a boyfriend."

On the eve of big-ticket movie roles in Oliver Stone's Alexander and Mr. & Mrs. Smith, this incarnation of Angelina Jolie was a cross between her comic-book hero Lara Croft and the do-gooder in Beyond Borders. She was confident. She had a mission. She had found the wherewithal to turn her gaze finally outward. She was fairly obsessed with motherhood, flying airplanes, and the world's disadvantaged and displaced. She had been named a Goodwill Ambassador by the United Nations. "I'd love to be able to donate my services," she said, "to fly sick people to hospitals, you know, like people who have cancer or people who have lost their limbs. I could deliver food. Anything. Just to be doing something practical would be great."

Brad Pitt was married to America's sweetheart, the wholesome Jennifer Aniston. The tabloid juggernaut Brangelina was yet unknown. "In Mr. & Mrs. Smith, Brad and I are a married couple who have been together for a few years. I'm a little homemaker and I'm totally psychotic about how I want the curtains and everything, and he's mowing the lawn, all that."

She was a work of art CONTINUED





FILM CONTINUED

imitating life imitating art.

-MIKE SAGER,

"Women We Love," November 2004

3. 2005-present

She had become, by 2007, the oddest of things-a tabloid saint. She was once a walking scandal. Then she presumed to become something else-a global do-gooder and mother of many-and only at the supermarket checkout did the scarlet woman endure, her every act of charity or conception scrutinized for self-interest. According to the gossips, the man she loved, the movie star she had stolen, was always trying either to stop her from adopting or birthing another child and begging her to eat.

What a home wrecker she was! And what a prodigy of will. Six years later, Brad described their home life as "crazy," their bed crowded with children who complained only about their parents' public displays of affection-"Daddy, you're not going to start making out with Mommy again, are you?" But the tabloids, at last, were right.

Brangelina had a secret.

The secret was that Angelina Jolie didn't want to die. She had always spoken of the trauma of watching her mother die of cancer, but now she'd discovered that she had inherited the fatal predisposition to both breast and ovarian cancer and had slipped into a hospital for a preemptive mastectomy. She became an ambassador for her decision, as is her wont. But the knowledge of her trial is what makes the scene of her waking up to shorn wings in Maleficent hard to watch. It's what made her recent marriage to the father of her children a tribute to the least tabloidy qualities of all—devotion and endurance. And it's what makes the title of the new movie she's directed, Unbroken, sound so flatly autobiographical, though it's actually about World War II hero Louis Zamperini.

Does she have any secrets left? It hardly matters. We don't revere saints for their secrets, but for their sacrifices, and blood is what Angelina Jolie has always been willing to spill.

-TOM JUNOD, "Angelina Jolie Dies for Our Sins," JULY 2007

All This Nordic Drama

A PRIMER ON THE GLUT OF NEW SCANDINAVIAN THRILLERS

Having mined the buttoned-up gloom of British crime drama for all it's worth, Hollywood has turned north. Scandinavia's recent spate of bleak entertainment, catalyzed by The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo, echoes the region's transition from snowy utopia to just another place facing inequality, immigration, and government corruption like the rest of us. Colors are muted, protagonists are neurotic, and blood is spattered.



SCALE: Relative Scandinavian-ness measured in vaguely uncomfortable minimalist barstools





A Norwegian deep-sea diver played by the brilliant Aksel Hennie (left) joins a team of greedy Americans trying to exploit the 1980s North Sea oil boom. An obsession with his brother's suspicious death sends the diver down a convoluted hole of conspiracy and pressurized diving chambers. (Out December 5)



THE BRIDGE and BRON/BROEN

Odd-couple detectives hunt serial killers who use gruesome murders as metaphors for society. The Scandinavian original's on-the-spectrum cop sneaks up on you as the emotional center of the show, which can't be said for Diane Kruger's Texan-but-German-sounding take in the recently canceled American remake.



BORGEN

Denmark's first female prime minister navigates alliances and boys'-club dynamics while finding time to schedule sex with her husband twice a week. (That's about as light as the genre gets.) If "Danish coalition politics" doesn't do it for you, think of it as House of Cards with a fourth wall and some characters you can actually root for.



THE SNOWMAN

The seventh novel in Jo Nesbø's ultraviolent Harry Hole series will be the first to be adapted into an American film, directed by Sweden's Tomas Alfredson. This plot sets the tormented detective on the trail of a killer nicknamed the Snowman because of his creative use of victims' body parts in signature wintry sculptures.

THE RULES

Rule No. 82: Grown men who open the restroom door with a paper towel are still protecting themselves against the viral infectious disease known as cooties. Rule No. 124: "I consider him a friend" does not a statement of true friendship make. Rule No. 293: God bless the bubbly traffic reporter.





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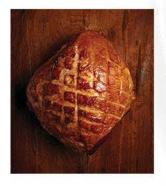


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START WITH: THE HAM

00 02:45

INGREDIENTS

- >1 whole ready-to-eat city ham, about 15 to 18 lbs (If refrigerated, let stand at room temperature for 3 hours before cooking.)
- >1 cup apple juice
- ▶ 1/2 cup maple syrup mixed with ⅓ cup bourbon

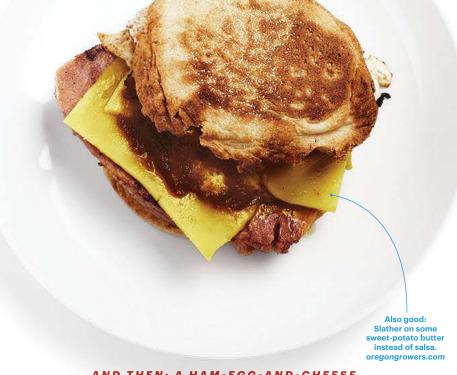
Place one rack in the lower third of the oven and remove the top rack (so you have room to baste).

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. **Score** a crosshatch pattern about 1/4-inch deep in the fat. Lay the ham in a shallow roasting pan, place in oven, and pour 1 cup water into the pan. Bake for 90 minutes.

Remove the water from the pan, add the apple juice, and pour the syrup-bourbon mixture over the top of the ham. Bake for another 45 minutes, basting often with the pan liquid. (If your ham is smaller, cook 8 minutes per pound.) You'll know it's done when the exterior is a crispy golden brown, the internal temperature hits about 140, and your entire house smells like ham. Let ham rest for 30 minutes before carving. Serves a lot of people for a very long time.

ABOUT THAT HAM

Order a heat-and-eat bone-in ham—often called a "city ham" because it's not dry-salt cured like a country n—from German butcher Karl Ehmer, a family



AND THEN: A HAM-EGG-AND-CHEESE

BREAKFAST SANDWICH

SERVES 00:10

Melt ½ Tbsp unsalted butter in a small nonstick pan over medium heat until it foams. **Add** a ¼-inch slice of ham and sear until caramelized, about 2 minutes per side.

Remove ham and place it on the bottom half of a toasted oversized English muffin, leaving the pan on the heat. Crack the eggs into the pan, cooking them in the residual fat until done sunnyside up, over medium, or however you want. Remove.

Lay a slice of Monterey or pepper-iack cheese on top of the ham, then one egg on top of that, then another slice of cheese, and then the other egg, to melt the cheese.

Top with chipotle salsa, close, and eat over the sink. So far so good.

FOLLOWED BY: HAM-AND-MUSHROOM

GRAVY

SERVES 00:30 Δ

INGREDIENTS

- > 4 Tbsp unsalted butter >1 leek, split, washed, and
- >3 cups cleaned and quartered mushrooms
- >1 cup chopped ham
- >3 Tbsp flour
- > 2 cups milk (plus extra ½ cup to adjust consistency if needed)
- > 1/2 tsp coarse salt
- ► ½ tsp ground black pepper
- >1 pinch cayenne pepper
- > snipped fresh chives

Heat the butter in a sauté pan over medium heat until it foams.

Add the leek and cook until translucent, 5 to 7 minutes.

Add the mushrooms and cook until they release their moisture, about

10 minutes

Add the ham and sauté until everything begins to brown. Add the flour and combine well, then add the milk and stir while it comes to a boil, thickening as it does.

Reduce temperature to low and add the salt, black pepper, and cayenne.

Cook until you can't taste the starchiness of the flour. about 10 minutes, adjusting seasoning and consistency as desired

Serve immediately, ladled over toasted country bread, French fries, or whatever kind of starch you've got, or transfer to a clean pot and cover with plastic wrap for later. Add chives.

Maybe think about going for a run?







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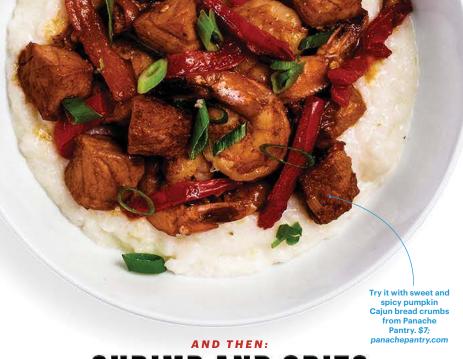


NEXT UP: TACOS!

SERVES 2-3 00:15

Heat 1/2 Tbsp vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Add 2 cups chopped ham and sauté until lightly browned on all sides, about 4 minutes. Add 1 tsp ancho-chile powder, toss, and cook for 1 minute. Turn off heat and let meat cool for 1 minute. Add ½ cup chopped white onion and ½ cup chopped pineapple. Toss. Top with chopped cilantro and spoon into six warmed six-inch flour tortillas, adding a squeeze of lime.





SHRIMP AND GRITS

(WITH HAM)

SERVES 00:15

Heat 2 Tbsp unsalted butter in a large sauté pan until it foams. Add 1 red bell pepper, cut

into short thin strips; 2 sliced garlic cloves; and the whites of 2 fat scallions, chopped (setting aside the chopped green parts).

Sauté for 2 minutes or until peppers start to wilt.

Add ½ tsp smoked paprika, 1/2 tsp coarse salt, and a pinch crushed redchile flakes, tossing to combine.

Add 1/2 lb peeled and deveined shrimp and 2 cups medium-sized ham chunks and sauté until the shrimp are firm, pink, and cooked

through, approximately 3 minutes.

Serve over grits or polenta, cooked according to instructions on the package. Top with the chopped scallion greens.

Check WebMD to see if Ham Fever is an AMA-recognized medical condition. It's not. But maybe you're Patient Zero? Hmm.

AND FINALLY:

NEW ORLEANS-STYLE RED BEANS



04:00

INGREDIENTS

- ▶1 lb dried red beans, picked over and rinsed
- > the ham bone
- > 2 bay leaves
- > 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- ▶½ tsp red-pepper flakes
- > 2 Tbsp olive oil
- >1 cup diced celery
- >1 cup diced yellow onion
- >1 cup diced green pepper
- > 3 cloves garlic, minced
- ▶ 1/4 tsp ground allspice
- > chopped scallions

In a large stockpot, bring 11/2 gts water to a boil. Add red

beans and cook at a boil for 5 minutes. Remove pot from heat and let beans soak for 1 hour, then drain and set aside. Rinse the pot, add 1½ qts water, and bring to medium heat. Add ham bone, bay leaves, thyme, and red-pepper flakes. Bring to a boil and lower heat, simmering for 20 minutes. Add drained beans.

While the beans simmer, place olive oil in a skillet over medium-high heat and cook celery, onion, pepper, and garlic, stirring frequently until the edges of the vegetables begin to color, about 8 to 10 minutes. Add allspice and cook, stir-

ring constantly, until vegeta-

NOTE: PICK YOUR RED BEANS WISELY

bles are coated.

Stir mixture into the pot, lower heat, and simmer until beans are cooked but not mushy, about 2 hours.

Remove the bone. Cut away any good bits of meat and add them to the beans.

Serve over white rice or grilled country bread and top with chopped scallions.

Reflect on your achievement. Maybe lay off ham for a while.



STYLE AGENDA THE ESSENTIALS



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> TIMBERLAND BOOT COMPANY



Holiday gatherings are times of cheer—fragile, ever-endangered cheer. To best navigate these emotional minefields, we enlisted the help of military professionals—those trained to react to and quell threats of all kinds.

BY NATE HOPPER

PREEMPTION

Applicable scenario:

Oncoming politicking, e.g., Mom mentions "gun nuts" near one's red-state in-laws. **Execution:** "Nothing's cookie-cutter," says Lt. Col. David Osterman, division chief of the Capabilities and Requirements Division of the Department of Defense's Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Directorate. But unless hostility is apparent when first encountering a threat to cheer. employ a "hail-andwarn system," giving the target notice to halt. If one too quickly escalates when the threat was unintended, he is. Osterman says. "likely going to agitate," turning himself into a threat.

DISABLEMENT

Applicable scenario:

Oblivious ruination of a childhood, e.g., a disrobed "Santa" might enter the sight line of a believing six-year-old. **Execution:** If a target continues his approach—displaying potential hostility or perilous ignoranceconsider pain compliance. Although, as the DOD writes, the intent is to "incapacitate targeted personnel... immediately," all damage done must be temporary. If within reach, one may engage a subject manually, perhaps by applying pressure points. As Osterman savs, "Sometimes pain is necessary to stop a situation [and maintain cheer]."

Ш **MEDIATION**

Applicable scenario:

Argumentation, e.g., Aunt Linda expresses her opinion of Uncle Tony's new girlfriend's enhancements.

Execution: When acting as a "moderator" for two adversaries, Maj. Christina Fanitzi, a military-intelligence officer who teaches courses on leadership and negotiation at West Point, says, "It's important that they hear each other's interests." Apply "the three skills": inquiry (into reasoning). acknowledgment (of reasoning), advocacy (of a mutually beneficial solution). This aims to ensure the solution is not compromised by "emotion," a toxic substance.

EVACUATION

Applicable scenario:

Someone must be removed with discretion, e.g., a freshman-in-college cousin overspikes his or her eggnog to the point of illness.

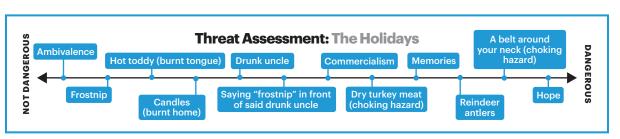
Execution: Fanitzi says: "Everything you do should look natural. Would [the military] ever try to conceal our actions in the desert by building a tree line? No." Which is to say: Camouflage one's (or a team's) escape with the natural happenings of a gathering. perhaps by deploying (feigned) cheer itself Refrain from attracting attention, which might, Fanitzi explains, "make your actions harder to recover from."

SURRENDER

Applicable scenario:

Chaos, e.g., one's brother, drunk off his special Red-Nosed Reinbeer drink-light beer, maraschino cherries, and raw eggattempts to use the concoction and a menorah to fire-breathe, becomes indignant when his apology goes unaccepted, secludes himself in the bathroom, taking with him all the marginally misshapen sugar cookies that one's child had labored over all morning, which, upon observing, the brother derides by shouting, "Nothing's cookie-cutter!"

Execution: Relent. And consider that cheer may, in fact, reside in mayhem itself.

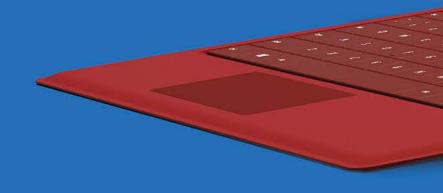






Powerful as a laptop, lighter than Air

The new Surface Pro 3 is a tablet and laptop in one. It's thin and light and runs your favorite desktop programs, like Adobe Photoshop, Office and Windows. Work from anywhere with the built-in adjustable Kickstand, Surface Pen, USB port, 12-inch screen, and an optional click-in keyboard. The Surface Pro 3. The tablet that can replace your laptop.







<u>The Weird Saga</u> <u>f Canad</u>ian Whisl

A LONG-UNDERRATED CATEGORY OF BOOZE FINALLY DEMANDS SOME ATTENTION

For as long as we can remember, Canadian whisky has been the king of the bottom shelf. Of the 200-odd million bottles of the stuff sold in the U.S. every year (putting it just behind American straight whiskey—bourbons, ryes, and Tennessees as a category), 100 million are destined for shots and highballs at Dave's Drop Inn and the Tanktown Tap. This demonstrates the good sense of the price-conscious American drinker: Canadian blended whisky is a far better product than its American blended counterpart.

American blended whiskey is generally made by diluting straight whiskey-in our case, bourbon, rye, or a mix of the two-with, essentially, vodka: unaged neutral spirits and water. Canadian blended whisky, however, is made much like Scotch and Irish blends, in which the diluting agent is instead a true whisky, albeit a very light one, that has been aged in barrels-base whisky, they call it. In Canada, the straight whiskies mixed with this are, of course, not Scottish malts or Irish potstill whiskeys, but rather local "flavoring whiskies," many of which bear a familial resemblance to our bourbons and ryes. The result is a smoother, richer blend: If American blends are

like water on your Cheerios, Canadian ones are milk.

Specializing in blended whisky is a great commercial strategy-if it's 1950. In 2014, the American market has mostly left the category to our northern cousins, focusing instead on higher-intensity, higher-priced (and highbatch, cask strength, wine-barrel finished, or just plain bourbon or rye. Almost all of the rye that used to go into American blends, for instance, is now being sold as straight whiskey. Until recently, this seemed to be fine with the Canadians. They went right on focusing on their standard shot-grade blends, along with a couple of equally traditional, very popular high-end ones (think plastic crowns and purple bags), basically letting the whole 21st-century whiskey renaissance pass them by.

er-profit) straight whiskey, be it small

Canadian distillers are finally realizing that's a dumb idea. For the first time in ages, we're starting to see interesting new whiskies out of the Great White North: straight whiskies (those flavoring whiskies bottled without blending), richer blends, whiskies aged in innovative ways.

Take [1] Lot No. 40 (\$57). By law and tradition, Canadian whiskies are allowed to call themselves "rye" even if there's no rye in them. This one, however, is legit: It's made from a mix of malted and unmalted rye and it's spectacular: dark, spicy, and very, very grainy—liquid pumpernickel.

[2] Collingwood (\$27) is a traditional Canadian blend that has had staves of toasted maple put in the barrels for a time. These give it maple notes, of course, and pleasant ones.

After tasting these, we took a second look at Canadian Club and Crown Royal, whiskies we thought we knew all too well. The regular [3] CC (\$15) might be a bit spirity, but it's clean and smooth and pleasant. But there's the [4] Small Batch Classic 12 (\$22), in the CC range, which throws off appealing hints of maple and Fig Newton and fresh-split oak. And while the purplebag [5] Crown Royal, at \$27, is as familiar and comfortable as an 80-proof Reese's Peanut Butter Cup, there's a [6] Crown Royal Reserve (\$40, the one in the gold-colored bag) that adds darkchocolate rye to the mix. It's elegant and superbly balanced.

One of the best Canadian whiskies is [7] J.P. Wiser's Red Letter (\$100 Canadian), which, unfortunately, is not yet avail-

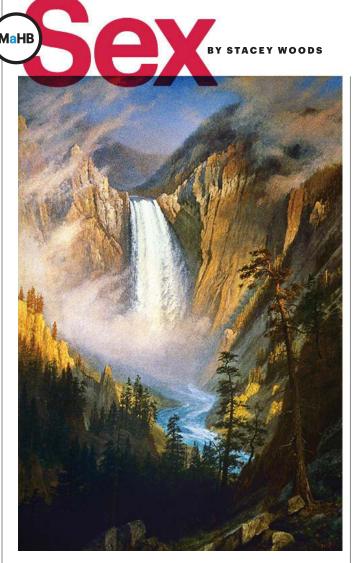
> able down here. Straight, 100 percent corn, base whisky, aged for ten years in used barrels and then briefly in a new barrel. (New oak tends to beat up whiskies this light, but Canadians use it sparingly.) The result is elegant, nutty, sweet, and clean. Almost worth a trip across the border. 19











WOMEN HAVE WET DREAMS TOO?

They came with version 8.1, ves. About 37 percent of women in scientific studies and on blogs report having what we're

calling "sleep-related orgasms" until we come up with something better. Sleep-related orgasms have little in common with true board-certified wet dreams: They aren't contingent on dreams, they needn't be nocturnal, and they don't emit much of anything, except in the case of some of our more spirited sisters. Also unnecessary for sleeprelated orgasms is genital concan induce orgasm by thought alone," explains Franceen King, clinical sexologist and author of the 2006 study "Sleep-Related Female Orgasms." Indeed, an earlier study of ten women who claimed to have orgasms without physical stimulation proved they were able to do so. (They're currently on the state-fair circuit if you want to catch them.) I'm afraid little else is known about SROs. If it helps any, some women say that they're not as good as the ones they're awake for-more like regularly scheduled maintenance or

something-and that they were thinking of you the whole time.

Does staving a virgin until marriage make you weird about sex?

It makes you weird about marriage. Yes, laboring for years under the delusion that marriage will be a bubbling wellspring of sex makes one very weird indeed.

Men who wait for marriage are often declared, by themselves, by their wives, or by committee, to be "early ejaculators," which we feel is a kinder term than "minutemen." The first 1.000 times it's fine, but it can become a habit. says clinical sexologist Patti Britton, "because he's never had any practice or teaching." And she's right: If you've never learned how to be sexual with someone, seek out a men's activity, like a nature walk or bowling league, in your area. The guys there can direct you to the nearest with-release massage parlor. Women who save themselves might fare even worse: Many of them, says Britton, will "engage in oral- or analsex play" while they wait, which turns out to be a total waste of energy, since those aren't even permitted in marriage. (For more, see sidebar.)

Can sex actually kill you?

If you provoke it, sex can mark you for death. Don't make yourself a target in sex's eyes. If you're feeling heart attacky, avoid it altogether or have sex when death isn't home; you're 2.7 times more likely to have a heart attack during or just after sex. You'll also want to sidestep the many diseases sex has set out for you by using a condom and/or not sleeping with people who hang around the methadone clinic. Lastly, you're at least 100 times more likely to die from sex if you kill yourself during sex, so keep the choking to a minimum until after vou're done.

Got a sex question of your own? E-mail it to us at sex@esquire.com.



A Word of **Encouragement** from Stacev Woods

Dear virgins, Whether you lost a bet, promised God, or just plain forgot to have sex, don't let your legacy of virginity make you feel weird now that you finally got here. One shouldn't be too okay with sex-it's good to be somewhat distrustful of oneself where sex is concerned, then vaguely displeased with oneself afterward. Reports of sex as some normal, healthy thing that you should feel good about have been greatly exaggerated.

Don't do anything special the first time. Avoid rose petals and skywriters. She might love them, but I'd lose all respect for you. As sexily as you can, approach your bride and gently take off the promise ring her dad gave her. Situate yourself near the main hole, which is considered so for reasons that will become apparent over time. Proceed as you must. Don't worry about staving off completion. Now that you've unburdened yourself of all future womenher friends, your friends, strangers you might meetyou have a lifetime to get it right. Love, Stacey

tact of any kind. "Many women



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The wool-and-silk tweed suit: Most Donegal-tweed suits are made of wool-all wooland feature a constellation of multicolored heathered flecks that broadcast to the world that you're wearing a very fine (and very warm) suit. The thing is: All-wool tweeds can feel a little rough, and when you add silk to the weave, the suit becomes not only that much softer but also lighter. You can even layer in a thin down vest (like this new vest from Moncler's Longue Saison line) without packing on too many visual pounds. Two-button wool-and-silk Donegal suit (\$795) by Michael Kors; nylon vest (\$650) by Moncler Longue Saison; cotton shirt (\$138) and silk tie (\$78) by Bonobos; leather shoes (\$750) by Santoni.

The wool-and-cashmere flannel suit: There's a reason why flannel has been a winter fallback

since forever: All fuzzy hand and structural integrity, it's as close to solid as suit cloth gets. And when it's woven with both standard wool and supersoft cashmere, it feels luxurious, too. *Two-button wool-and-cashmere jacket (\$795)* and trousers (\$325), Gant by Michael Bastian; wool turtleneck sweater (\$215) by Boss; leather boots (\$345) by Coach; leather-and-cashmere gloves (\$298) by John Varvatos.

The wool-and-mohair suit: Wool provides the warmth and the weight. Mohair adds the crispness and the suggestion of shine. Wool and mohair together result in a suit you can wear to business meetings, holiday parties, and the whole wide world in between. Twobutton wool-and-mohair suit (\$1,395) and silk scarf (\$295) by Burberry; cotton shirt (\$175) by Boss; leather shoes (\$900) by Esquivel.

Ask Nick Sullivan

OUR FASHION DIRECTOR WILL NOW TAKE YOUR QUESTIONS

Ideal length for a topcoat?

@NEFASHIONBRANDS

► I prefer at or slightly above the knee, which is long enough to cover my suit jacket but short enough not to impede movement. Whenever I've gone longer, I feel a touch weighed down.

The Year in Style

THE HIGH, THE LOWS, THE HATS



Most Patriotic Ensemble: Team USA at the Winter Olympics. courtesy of Ralph Lauren

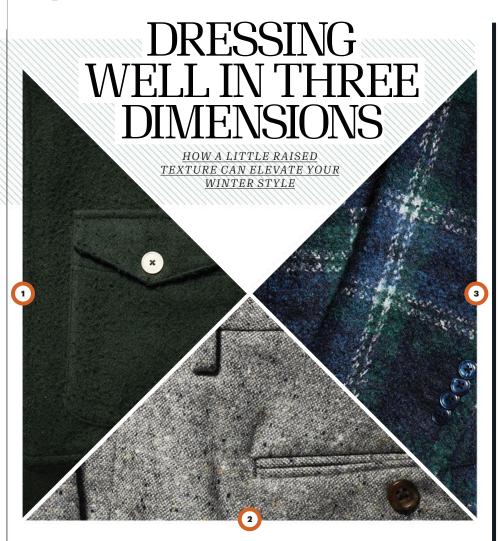


Most Redundant Accessory Shia LaBeout





Style



1. Casentino: Put down that sweater shaver, folks: Casentino wool comes prepilled, and the pills that pepper the surface are not to be pulled, shaved off, or trifled with. The pills, in fact, are sort of the whole point: They keep cold air out and body heat in, and they also manifest a sense of lived-in luxury that usually takes years of actual wear and tear to achieve. Casentino-wool jacket (\$995) by Eidos Napoli.

2. Tweed: Whether you're talking about the scratchy singularity of the Harris variety or the ruddy heft of Donegal, tweeds are a class of cloth that you have to feel to believe. The varying textures and the subtle lumps, knobs, and protrusions give the clothes, and the man wearing them, that much more character. Wool Donegal trousers (\$228) by Bonobos.

3. Alpaca: The flatter and smoother the weave, the more refined the piece of clothing: Such is the conventional wisdom. What to do, then, with a crazy mixture of alpaca with wool, mohair, and even polyamide that has loose ends shooting out this way and that? Wear it. Stay warm with it. And welcome every request from every woman who wants to touch it. Woolalpaca-mohair-andpolyamide jacket (\$1,050) by L.B.M. 1911.

SCARVES WITHOUT COMMENT

They're warm. We like them. And we think you will, too.



Silk scarf (\$325) by Burberry London.



Wool scarf (\$55) by Nautica.



Wool-and-angora scarf (\$129) by Paul Stuart.



Modal scarf (\$228) by John Varvatos. Two-button wool suit (\$1,784) by Paul Stuart; cotton shirt (\$175) by Ovadia & Sons.



Most Controversial Hat: Pharrell Williams's Most Unloved Suit: Barack Obama's khaki suit





Worst-Dressed TV Show: Silicon Valley Best
Alternative
Black Tie:
Jared
Leto at the
Oscars





BVLGARI octo

TOURBILLON

«Details make perfection, and perfection is not a detail»

Leonardo da Vinci



A cashmere overcoatis sharp, but it isn't warm enough in the coldest bit of Colorado winter. Any other suggestions?

@KZSTAN

► When push comes to shovel, I tend to go to the serious professionals and look for a goosedown-filled parka from the likes of North Face and Moncler. If, however, you're determined to keep things sartorial, my old camel-hair polo coat by Hickey Freeman is the warmest dress coat I have ever owned.

ONE PAIR TO WEAR EVERYWHERE

This winter, the folks at Johnston & Murphy decided to take their hugely popular Karnes wing-tip shoes and transform them into all-terrain, all-purpose boots. The leather is supple and the broqueing sophisticated, and the lugged rubber sole provides enough traction and support to crunch through the first thin layer of ice or snow. Not to mention they'll pair just as well with jeans as with a flannel suit. Leather boots (\$195) by Johnston & Murphy.

D.I.Y. WEATHER-**PROOFING**



FOR YOUR LEATHER SHOES:

A few squirts will keep the rain and snow out and the salt stains off. Balm Proofer XL Protector (\$13) by Timberland.



FOR YOUR COTTON JACKETS AND SHOES:

Say you've got a heavier canvas shoe or cotton jacket that you want to render wind- or water-resistant—one application of this melted wax will keep you dry through the worst of what winter throws at you. (Also good for rewaxing your Barbour or Filson waxed-cotton goods.) Heat-activated fabric dressing (\$20) by Otter Wax.



FOR YOUR GORE-TEX PARKAS ET AL.:

Ideal for the synthetic materials that make up most performance outerwear, this stuff enhances existing water repellency while maintaining fabric breathability. Restorative water repellent (\$10) by Scotchgard.

Best Alternative to Black Tie (runnerup): Kevin **Durant at** the Espys



Most Epic Rant: <u>Tom</u> <u>Hardy</u> on pants. "The world is just pants, isn't it? It's fucking ridiculous. Do vou know what I mean? It's like.

What happened to man's

pants-you know?

Most Incredible (As in Not Credible) **Fashion** Trend: Normcore







Most III-Advised **Shorts: Bradley** Cooper's



Style









A MAN OF MANY TĪFS

<u>BUT WHY? AND MORE IMPORTANTLY: WHY?</u>

Two things occurred to me recently, sitting at a fashion show and surrounded by some of the supposedly best dressed men in New York, a good many of them dressed in loose T-shirts and baggy jeans and resembling nothing so much as fancy housepainters. One: After years of rampant peacockery, it looks like the pendulum in men's wear is swinging back to a more casual and laid-back place; and two: I needed to rethink my tie habit. I never have to wear one, except to the occasional wedding or funeral, yet still I tie one on every morning before heading to a business-casual workplace in the hope of ... what, exactly? Standing out? Being taken seriously? Aging myself? Reminding myself that I am, in fact, at a place of business and not at a bar that sells beer by the pitcher? The ties I wear, they've always meant something, but what do they mean *now*, in the insurgent reign of fancy housepainters?

That's how I found myself in Alexander Olch's workshop and storefront in lower Manhattan, where the designer who makes most of my ties was helping me work through some of those questions. Olch himself wears a tie every day. Always has. He grew up in Manhattan and attended a private school that required him to knot one up, every day, from first through 12th grade. When he went on to study filmmaking at Harvard, he continued wearing a tie, both as what he calls "a point of principle"—"a gentleman at university should wear a tie and jacket," he says, half-kiddingand as an act of rebellion against the Patagonia-fleece-clad sheep around him. (One Halloween party, he borrowed a fleece jacket and a baseball hat to dress up, or down, as a typical Harvard undergrad. Turns out three people at the same party came dressed as him-jacket, tie, and even a pocket watch, which he swears he's never worn.) Today, at 37, thirteen years since he started sell-

Alexander Olch, knotting up the ol' four-in-hand.

ing one-off ties to friends and seven years since Bergdorf Goodman placed its first big order for his line, he wouldn't think of not wearing a tie, even though to him "it's resolutely clear that most people no longer have to wear ties. That's who we focus on: guys who dress up as a matter of choice, not obligation."

His ties, for the uninitiated, are not like most ties: Often cut from textiles of his own design (lots of textured wools and cashmeres in winter, seersucker and brushed cotton or silk in the summer), they're a few millimeters thinner than the typical tie yet not so thin as to be considered skinny. "The shape has been the same since I started, and I modeled it after one of my dad's old Hermès ties from the '60s," Olch says. "It struck the perfect balance to me as not too skinny and not too fat. And notice how it doesn't go straight down from the knot, which is a little aggressive for my taste—it tapers slightly and lands between skinny and classic." That in-betweenness is what drew me to Olch's tie in the first place—that I'm wearing a tie but not that kind of tie; I'm a professional but not that kind of professional—and his are the kind that can be worn without any implications of affectation or, worse, irony.

So we get into it, this meaning-of-tie business, with him taking the lead: "When formality doesn't matter, what is a tie, really? Who does it mean anything to, aside from you?" (He's working his way through it.) "There's something very interesting that happens when you dress up for yourself." (He pauses.) "I knew an artist, a painter, who lived and worked in a two-room apartment. He'd wake up in the morning, get dressed in a tie and jacket, walk over to the next room, and he'd be dressed for his day at work. Then, when he was done for the day, he'd go back to the other room, take off his tie, and be done with work."

Both Olch and his friend know that ties aren't really decorative. In fact, they're really, really useful. They signal to others that you're quite possibly serious about whatever you're doing, and they're tangible reminders, hanging right there under your nose, that you are on notice. To perform, to persuade, to be something or someone else. For a certain kind of man, no such reminders are necessary. But for others, the tie is the difference between looking like you care and looking like you don't. And that, to me and to Alexander Olch, still means something.

-RICHARD DORMENT

Ask Nick

What's a good source for an olive-colored wool peacoat?

@DEXFROMHALIFAX

▶ The best I've found. short of going for an actual vintage Armysurplus coat, is from Alpha Industries (via mcguirearmynavy.com for just \$90!). Looks authentic, as it should, since it's made by one of the U.S. military's oldest clothing suppliers.



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Where American is made."

The True Classics

ALL THE RETRO-INSPIRED ELIXIRS LOOK GOOD IN MEDICINE CABINETS, BUT WE ADMIRE THOSE THAT HAVE BEEN GETTING IT RIGHT FOR DECADES

BY RODNEY CUTLER

Aftershave

Most Old Spice offerings don't have all that much in common with the company's original products from the 1930s. However, [1] Old Spice Classic aftershave (\$9; cvs. com) is almost exactly the same formula. It feels good, prevents irritation, and makes you smell like your granddad. Although a few women around the Esquire office didn't exactly think that was a good thing.

Hair

If you want the ironclad comb-over look, or if you want to keep your hairstyle through a tornado, [2] Murray's Superior hair dressing (\$3; murrayspomade. com) is your best and most economical choice. One canister of the 89-year-old pomade can last you until the next time shiny hair is in style again.

Shave

[3] Proraso shave cream (\$10; west-coastshaving.com) has been made in the same Italian factory with the same ingredients since the 1940s. The menthol and eucalyptus oils tighten pores and provide an invigorating start to your morning routine.



Powder [4] Gold Bond Medicated body pow-

PRORASI

der (\$5.30 for 4 oz; cvs.com) deodorizes, soothes rashes, and stimulates (when used in certain spots whew!). The menthol powder has been saving us from swamp crotch for just over a century. God bless it.

Facial Hair

You might think mustache wax is pretentious. You might be right. But wax also gives your hair a healthier appearance and keeps food out of your whiskers. Whereas most new waxes require more kneading, [5]
Clubman mustache wax (\$5; clubmanonline.com) is creamy and easy to use.

Mouthwash

C.O. Bigelow pharmacy recently revived some of its original formulas, with one of the best being [6] Dr. Keightley's mouthwash (\$22.50; bigelowchemists.com). The modern version is painfully powerful, and with a cinnamon-minty mixture it's also more refreshing than generic drugstore mouthwash.

Soap[7] Dr. Hunter's castile soap by Caswell

tile soap by Caswell-Massey (\$10; caswell-massey.com) hasn't changed much since 1861. Castile soap is finally being embraced outside the granola community as more people realize that the olive-oil-based cleanser is easier on skin than most major soap brands.

Rodney Cutler is an Ironman triathlete and the owner of Cutler salons in New York City.



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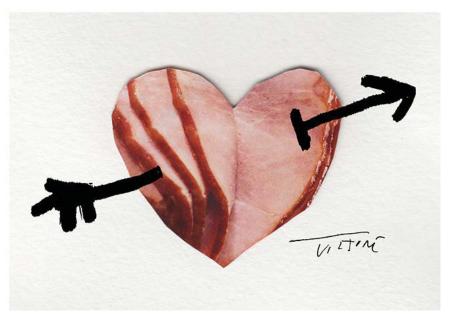
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The Future of Pleasure

JUST HOW HIGH DO WE WANT TO GET?

THE FIRST PROHIBITION, AGAINST ALCOHOL, ended on December 5,1933, precisely at 5:32 p.m. EST. The second prohibition, against drugs, is dragging to a more staggered conclusion. Marijuana is fully legal now for medical use in twenty-three states and outright legal in two, with legalization under way in three others. The will to prosecute the use and abuse of other drugs is waning as well: The police are sick of losing an unwinnable war. The medical establishment, for the most part, prefers harm reduction over incarceration. Tellingly, the three most prominent Republican leaders—Rand Paul, Chris Christie, and Rick Perry—have all called, in one way or another, for an end to the drug war, or at least, in Perry's words, a strategy that "keeps people from going to prison and destroying their lives." And these are Republicans. The question now is not whether the war on drugs will end but what the peace will look like. At stake is nothing less than the future of pleasure itself—whether it will be fleshy or chemical.

A negotiated surrender to the drug culture is piecemeal but inevitable. Cocaine, heroin, and cannabis have gotten purer and cheaper. That's what \$1 trillion of law enforcement will buy you. The end of prohibition is devoutly to be wished, but the cost of the triumph of drugs is real: Heroin overdoses doubled between 2010 and 2012. Then there are the legal drugs that have become the salve for all our wounds, the solution to all

our problems. The pharmaceutical industry accounts for nearly 20 percent of all private-sector research and development investments in the United States and, by its own estimate, is worth about \$790 billion a year. One in five Americans—one in four American women—take psychiatric medication. Pharmaceuticals constitute more than half of contemporary spirituality—pills have replaced priests and psychoanalysts; they define our pursuit of ecstasy as much as our pursuit of health. Consciousness in our time requires sedation and acceleration, achieved with as much convenience as possible.

The widespread chemical alteration of consciousness coincides with fundamen-

THE DRUG WAR'S LEGACY
BETWEEN 1990 AND 2007...

11%PURER

COCAINE

80% CHEAPER

60% PURER 81% CHEAPER **161%**PURER

86% CHEAPER

HEROIN

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NEW YORK LONDON MILAN MADRID ISTANBUL TOKYO HONG KONG SHANGHAI









EST. 1818



STEPHEN MARCHE WOULD LIKE TO OFFER UP A EULOGY...

tal changes to the basic human pleasures: sex and food. Sex and food are way, way better than they used to be, or at least way, way more elaborate and sophisticated. Life is inundated with new ingredients and new techniques for enjoying them. In a desperate attempt at differentiation, restaurants have begun to serve elk velvet or whole carp heads or bowls of spiced crickets or multicourse tasting menus of dirt. There is a mass pursuit of innovative delicacy. Even something as stupid as the cronut generates subindustries of couriers who wait in line for hours to deliver the first-made specimens to the curious and overmon-

eyed. And comfort food has undergone extreme refinement: Fried chicken receives the same attention today that was once given to French classics in luxury hotels.

Sex has followed the same course of innovation and refinement. Every season brings its trend, and acts that were beyond the pale a couple generations ago—anal sex, homemade pornography, sadomasochistic bondage—are now standard marital activities. Abandoning traditional morality more or less altogether, the new pursuit of pleasure is leaving behind the question of identity, too. The one overarching sexual commandment remaining is to follow curiosity and desire to their ends.

The general level of culinary and sexual sophistication is one of the best features of being alive right now. Drugs represent the opposite of this new sophistication. The pleasure of drugs is the pleasure of converting the human into the machine, of taking the human as a series of buttons to be pressed—buttons that require more force to press over time. One cannot learn to enjoy drugs; one can only long for a lost innocence to break. There is nothing in this world more pathetic than a man snorting coke nostalgically.

The end of prohibition is the end of a glamorous era in consciousness as a dangerous adventure—the era of Timothy Leary and acid trips and the belief that through chemistry "the doors of perception" would swing open to reveal a deeper truth underlying the world and human nature. That starry-eyed adolescent faith has evaporated

in the face of experience. The illicitness of drugs lent them a glamour that disguised their stupidity. Mommy and Daddy don't want you to try this, so you must. The drug scene, in fiction and in movies, has been a replacement for the sex scene: a facile demonstration of cool—often tragic cool, but cool none-theless. In the tradition of Jack Kerouac and Bret Easton Ellis, the novelist Tao Lin has defined himself as alternative mainly by recounting, in unreadable anatomic detail, his drug consumption. I suppose it's the drugs that make him so derivative. Meanwhile, the drug dealer is just another businessman persecuted by the government. That cliché, at least, is giving way: Breaking Bad began with that idea of Walter White—the ultimate normcore hero—and then turned; the chemist designing a better product turned out in the end to be a pure sociopath. This month, the long-awaited fictional biopic of Pablo Esco-

bar, Escobar: Paradise Lost, stars Benicio Del Toro as the man who cornered the cocaine market, and he is reminiscent principally of Osama bin Laden in his total indifference to human life, an utter monster.

Now that everyone takes drugs, the culture of drugs will no longer be a subculture but rather part of the mainstream. But the pleasures of drugs, unlike those of sex and food, require no education and no taste, just the dosage and a proper technique. In a recent metadata study of Yelp reviews, researchers from Stanford and Carnegie Mellon discovered a startlingly wide-



Down With the Brits

WE'VE MADE HEROES OF SOME OF HUMANITY'S VILEST PEOPLE: THE ENGLISH UPPER CLASS

Here is the mystery: Every time you see posh English people onscreen—in Sherlock or The Imitation Game or Downton Abbey—they are solving the world's problems. It's mysterious, because posh English people are the world's problems. They seem so quaint and so harmless onscreen, with their exaggerated manners, sexual awkwardness, ingrained decency, and cleverness. And so useful, too-helping their servants buy glasses and cracking the Enigma code. In real life, of course, nothing on this earth is more useless than a toffee-nosed Brit. It's not just that they're parasites whose principal legacy is the national borders of the Middle East. The British upper classes are anti-Semitic by instinct, racist to the core, and convinced of their own superiority despite a hundred years of collapse. They celebrate inequality; they nurture it; they are the living embodiment of the entitlement to wealth by accident of birth. None of this is unknown, especially to the English. especially to the English upper classes. Still, they triumph. They are everything we despise collectively. Except we adore them. —S. M.

The Imitation Game, starring Benedict Cumberbatch (above), is out now. The new season of Downton Abbey premieres in January.

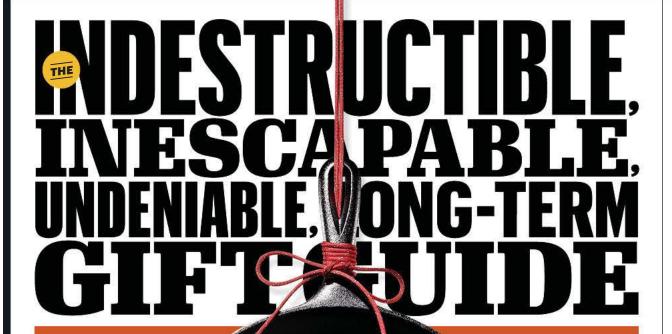
spread pattern: Expensive food was described in sexual terms, while cheap food was described in drug-related terms. The distinction says less about Yelp reviewers than it does about the future of pleasure, which is splitting: On one side, there is the fleshly and sophisticated and expensive, and on the other the chemical and easy and cheap. On one side, the organic apple in season; on the other, crystal meth and lube. The future of pleasure will be a wavering between the two.

Ending prohibition is an act of pragmatism but also one of optimism. Its hope is that Americans are sensible and mature enough to be responsible for their own actions, to choose their own pleasures sensibly. That's a bold hope, maybe even a reckless one, but it seems there are few options other than to take the chance. The problem with being treated like an adult is that pretty soon you find out if you are one.





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EXCLUSIVE



BOOTLACES BY RHINO LACES

They're basically your standard boot-laces, except they were created by wildland firefighters out of materials used on the Mars rover, and they can pull a car. Also, they're guaranteed for life. (\$22)

Items with this tag are custom-made and available only at bespokepost.com/esquire.

It's a bold bet, giving a gift meant to last a very long time. It requires confidence in your ability to find something someone will want to keep around, of course. But more important, it shows faith that the person you give it to won't look at it in ten years and groan at the thought of where it came from. With help from a great little company called Bespoke Post, we gathered dozens of things that qualify for the job—things that are built to last. Some have been around forever. Some were made just for us. All are available at bespokepost.com/esquire.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEFFREY WESTBROOK





This exclusive bottling from Ilegal is aged longer than anything it sells in the U.S.—80 percent matured in American oak for a year and 20 percent in French oak for two years—making it smoother and woodier than most mescals. The bag from Filson is roomy, water-resistant, guaranteed for life, and accommodates just about anything you need.

Even nonintoxicants. (Mescal: \$140; bag: \$325)



LEATHER BASEBALL BY HUNTINGTON BASE BALL CO.

Huntington researches pieces of vintage baseball gear and re-creates them using the original specs—as it did for this ball, handmade for us from rich tobacco-colored leather. It's designed to be used; given the hue, however, you might want to stick to daylight hours. (\$45)

SPICY HONEY BY MIXEDMADE

Yeah, yeah, but put it on pepperoni pizza and then come talk to us. Also, sidenote: Honey lasts forever. If it crystallizes, just drop the bottle in some warm water. (\$14)



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Like

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Hollow but long-standing tradition Hope of romantic advancement

Hope of professional advancement

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DEATH & CO: MODERN CLASSIC COCKTAILS

A vast store of information from the cocktail gurus at New York's Death & Co. It contains everything there is to know about classic and contemporary cocktails-from barware to spirits to improvisational techniques—and concludes with about 150 pages of recipes that have earned Death & Co's approval. (\$40)



► When I was five or six, I asked for a toy workbench for Christmas. I got a Black & Decker Workmate with a steel chassis and a vise. That bench became a running gag in our house, this unused monster in the garage, sitting in heavy testament to my dad's misplaced practicality. But today, that bench is in my garage, and I use it all the time. And whenever I'm cranking something into its grip, I think of everything else that my parents gave me. Maybe our eventual union was just a happy accident, but I like to think that my dad could see the value of gifts we grow into: a pair of great skates that are three sizes too big, a hunting knife that we can't use till we're 18. They are the only presents we get to open more than once.

-CHRIS JONES



ALL-PURPOSE DIRT BY PROSPECTOR CO.

You take the dirt—actually a fine, powdery mix of clays and minerals—and rub it on your face. Instead of making you look like a potentially dangerous drifter, it makes you look like a man with better, clearer, less flaky, and less oily skin. You can also mix it with water and use it as a body wash, hence the "all-purpose." (\$32)



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You make a large ice cube (using the special tray included), place it in the jaws of this heavy metal contraption, and stand by for about a minute as the machine's weight and the aluminum's thermal conductivity shape it into a perfect sphere. (\$150)



with weighted

wooden han-

dles to work your

arms. Comes in

two sizes. (\$20)

CARDAMOM BITTERS BY FEE BROTHERS

Fee Brothers has made bitters since Prohibition. These are Boker's style, patterned after bitters made by a German immigrant in 1828. An alternative to Angostura bitters, with hints of root beer and orange, they're excellent in pre-Prohibition cocktails. (\$10)



INFUSER BY SEMPLI

The vessel is hand-blown leadfree crystal and the rod is borosilicate, a material you may remember from high school chemistry experiments. Use it to add notes of fruit, herbs, and spices to your liquor, as well as heat. (\$55)

ONE SUGGESTION:

Combine the ribs and seeds of 2 jalapeños, the chopped flesh of 1/4 jalapeño, and a half bottle of Siembra Azul blanco tequila in the infuser above. Stir and let sit for 20 minutes. From Death & Co: Modern Classic Cocktails, page 90.



SHARD TOOL BY GERBER

It looks like nothing-well, maybe a badly drawn cartoon dog. But here's what it is: a pry bar, a wire stripper, a bottle opener, three screwdrivers, and a key chain. Plus, you can take it on a plane. (\$6)



Perfect Pairings







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- · Start with a Dark Robust Syrup
- · Top off with Basil Hayden's
- · Shake it with a clementine wedge

Bobo's Mountain Sugar & 10Engines'

"ENGINE OIL"

WESTON, VT

Engine Oil was the idea of my buddy James Fox who pens the blog, 10engines. "It may seem hokey to those below the 49th parallel, but good maple syrup is a serious cash crop [in Vermont]. It is worth 20 times the price of a gallon of gasoline," Fox said.

Having grown up ten miles from Bobo's Mountain, Fox and Bobo's Mountain Sugar's Tina Hartell are old friends.

"I have been to more sap boiling parties than christenings," said Fox, as a means of explaining the importance of maple syrup to the people of Vermont.

As Hartell tells it, Fox's idea for a syrup collaboration could not have come at a better time.

"This season, our syrup came back really dark," she said, "darker than motor oil," Fox chimed in with a wink.

Without getting too technical, Hartell explained why this happened. "The longer sap boils, the darker the syrup becomes, and through the process of reverse osmosis, the syrup becomes lighter. That process removes three-quarters of the water, which then raises the sugar content of the sap."

"Also, there are naturally occurring microorganisms in the syrup. The later in the sugaring season the production runs, the warmer the sap is, and the more apt the microorganisms are to reproduce. This makes the syrup darker."

Hartell says, "none of this explains why Bobo's and so many other syrup makers in Vermont made so much dark syrup this year. In spite of the fact that we have reverse osmosis, we made nothing but dark syrup from the get-go (late March)."

When she asked another heavy-hitter in the Vermont maple syrup world—someone who's been producing syrup for over 40 years—why everyone's syrup went dark, he said, "Because that's what the trees gave us."

Well said.

- Max Wastler





MAX WASTLER is a Chicago-based storyteller and shop owner known for his appreciation of America, its people, its places, and in particular, its handmade things, including Basil Hayden's Kentucky Straight Bourbon. His blog will leave you educated, inspired, and definitely thirsty for more.

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STYLE AGENDA THE ESSENTIALS



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There's a menswear revolution whispering through wardrobes. A return to tailored confidence. Bringing back the classics: Tried and true, with a twist.

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A heavy handmade block constructed out of walnut that nearly glows, this features a brickwork pattern, providing a stronger joint than the usual checkerboard pattern, and wood fibers that face up, making it easier on your knife's edges. (By Brooklyn Butcher Blocks, \$200)



THE SOLID SINGLE

▶ When I was ten, I bought my mother a pair of nude pantyhose for Christmas, and I've been underwhelming people ever since. I don't really care if she or the other beneficiaries of my years of gifting love my presents; the important thing is that no one ever dislikes them—meaning that no one is ever forced into the position of feigning gratitude before stowing the ambitious-ifwrongheaded gift in a closet until enough years have elapsed that it becomes acceptable to donate it to Goodwill, or quietly palm it off on a younger cousin, or just throw it in the trash. My gifts may all provoke the same response—Oh! Don't I already own this?—but those stockings, forgotten as soon as the next present was unwrapped, were worn to tatters. So while others swing for the home run—the pearls or the TAG Heuer or the car sitting in the driveway with a novelty bow on the roof—I will be safe on first. -ANNA PEELE



MACHINED WALLET BY MACHINE ERA CO.

Made of high-grade aluminum, it's extremely thin, light, and nearly impossible to bendall without sacrificing comfort, style, or utility. Ideal for those who want a wallet that works well and has a good chance of outliving human civilization. (\$28)



PINE-TAR SOAP BY DR. SQUATCH SOAP CO.

It contains oatmeal and pinetar oil, smells like the woods, and is made by a couple of old friends in Washington. Just don't put it on a bat. Or if you do, don't swing it. (\$6)

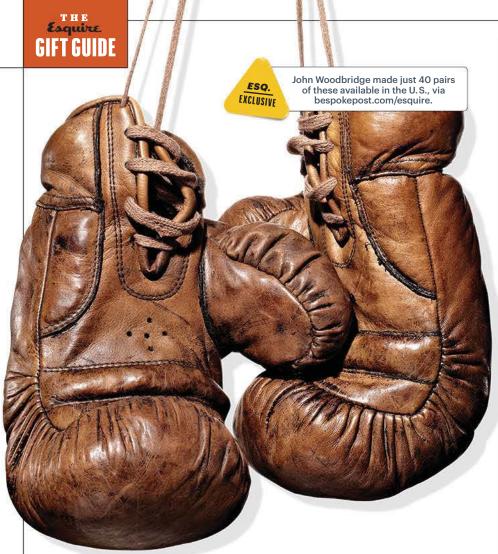




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A CURE FOR HOLIDAY STRIFE: BOXING GLOVES

Made of French leather, tanned in Italy, and hand-sewn and hand-polished, these vintage beaters harken back to the 1920s—a simpler time, when you seasoned your gloves with the blood, sweat, and tears of your opponents. Or maybe just hung them on the wall for effect. (By John Woodbridge and Sons Makers, \$125)

DOPP KIT BY BLUE CLAW CO.

The Dopp kit is an essential piece of equipment for frequent travelers-at least those who don't still insist on carrying their toiletries in a deteriorating plastic bag. And this one, crafted for Esquire from a single piece of Horween Chromexcel leather and a water-resistant olive-drab lining, will get better-looking every time you use it. Unlike the plastic bag. (\$160)





LEATHER GLOVES BY HESTRA

Hestra, a four-generation family business in Sweden, has been successfully reviving the lost 17th-century French art of glove cutting. These are made of deerskin and lined with wool. (\$75)



CLASSIC **ESPRESSO MAKER** BY LA CAFETIÈRE

Good-looking, easy to use-just add coffee grounds and cold water; heat on a stove or over an open flame; and in a few minutes you have espressoand it will last forever if you take care of it. (\$30)

CORKSCREW BY J. L. LAWSON & CO.

The handle is manually machined solid brass, the screw is stainless steel, the sheath is California latigo leather, and there are only 100 available for sale. It's also the only bar tool we know of that can open wine bottles and probably survive being thrown out of an airplane. (\$120)





the Ultimate SHIRT & TIE Collection





HOLIDAY OFFICE PARTY



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DATE NIGHT

VERSATILE. SHARP. STYLISH.

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THEATRE NIGHT



NEW YEAR'



EVERY OTHER OCCASION



▶ In many families, shaying is seen as a sacred rite, an elemental skill, ceremoniously passed from one generation to the next. In mine, it's a way to get hair off your face.

So when I asked for a safety razor for Christmas last year, I wasn't trying to channel a simpler age, when men were men and quality was king and blah was blah blah blah. Liust wanted something I could shave with that wouldn't irritate my sensitive skin. And what I found was that despite the safety's reputation for bloodletting, it's actually very easy on the skin. You have to get your technique down, but once you do, you'll discover a shave that feels less like scraping and more like squeegeeing. You let the razor do the work, taking another pass against the grain if you want to go from a good shave to a very close one.

In time, I came to enjoy the quiet exactitude of the whole thing. It became notable, I hate to admitsomething that someday might be worth passing down, a sacred rite, an elemental skill.

-JOE KEOHANE

SAFETY RAZOR BY STANDARD **RAZORS**

A sleek update made from aircraft-grade aluminum. (\$55, with shave cream, blades, an alum block, and a shaving towel)

A SUPERIOR MOBILE DEVICE

For all your clandestine drinking needs: a six-ounce pewter flask made by A. R. Wentworth in Sheffield, England, one of the oldest pewter-making areas in Europe. Best of all: Pewter doesn't make your liquor taste like metal. (\$80)





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EXTRA-HEAVY-WEIGHT JEANS BY GUSTIN

They're heavy-made of 18-ounce Japanese raw-selvage denim, as opposed to the usual 12- to 14-ounce-but they break in quickly and last a very long time, delaying, perhaps indefinitely, the inevitable catastrophic crotch failure that befalls lesser jeans. Good for winter, too. (\$140)





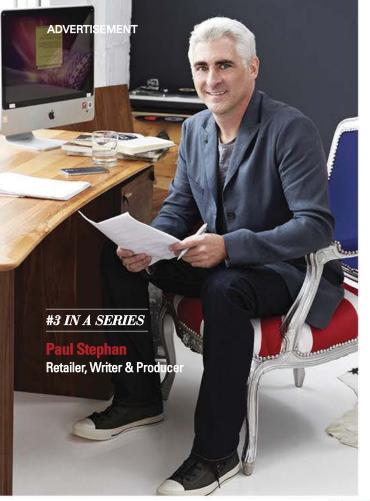
NECKTIES BY ASPECD APPAREL

This Brooklyn company makes ties from 100 percent Japanese cotton featuring Japaneseinfluenced designs. (\$50 each)



PASS THE TIME

The appeal of a mechanical watch goes beyond having an intricate complication housed in a sharp-looking piece of equipment strapped to your wrist. It's about the ritual. Day in and day out, you get up, you wind your watch, and you head out. Up, wind, out. It just takes a second to do, but it marks time in the way that quiet things tend to. This mechanical field watch from Weiss, a new company in L. A., is entirely handmade, features more than 100 Swiss parts, and comes with a natural brown leather band. It works with a suit as well as it does in, well, a field. (\$950)



NEW DIRECTIONS IN VERSATILITY

A WRITER VENTURES INTO RETAIL

PAUL STEPHAN is a dad, a filmmaker, and an entrepreneur who's embraced his versatile skill set to launch a successful retail store (Goldie's on 4th) and make his work and homelife as interesting as his writing. He's also a Hollywood producer and a player in the Internetseries boom.

Now he hopes to find a crossover that delivers the same flexibility.

BELOW LEFT, Goldie's on 4th is equally as innovative, with a strong vegan/animal-friendly focus.

The store's "retro row" Long Beach location stands in sharp contrast to Paul's modern film techniques.

the —

FOR ESQUIRE READERS

After test-driving the **Chevrolet EQUINOX**, Car and Driver enthusiast Stewart Graham was certain the crossover offered the versatility Paul needed (with zero compromises):

> Thoughtfully designed space for passengers and cargo—PLUS handsfree access to favorite infotainment with available Chevrolet MyLink.*

*MyLink functionality varies by model. Full functionality requires compatible Bluetooth® and smartphone, and USB connectivity for some devices.

MY NEW DISCOVERY "The AVAILABLE REAR ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

lets my kids watch a DVD with wireless headsets while I listen to my music up front." -PAUL





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BONUS VIDEOS

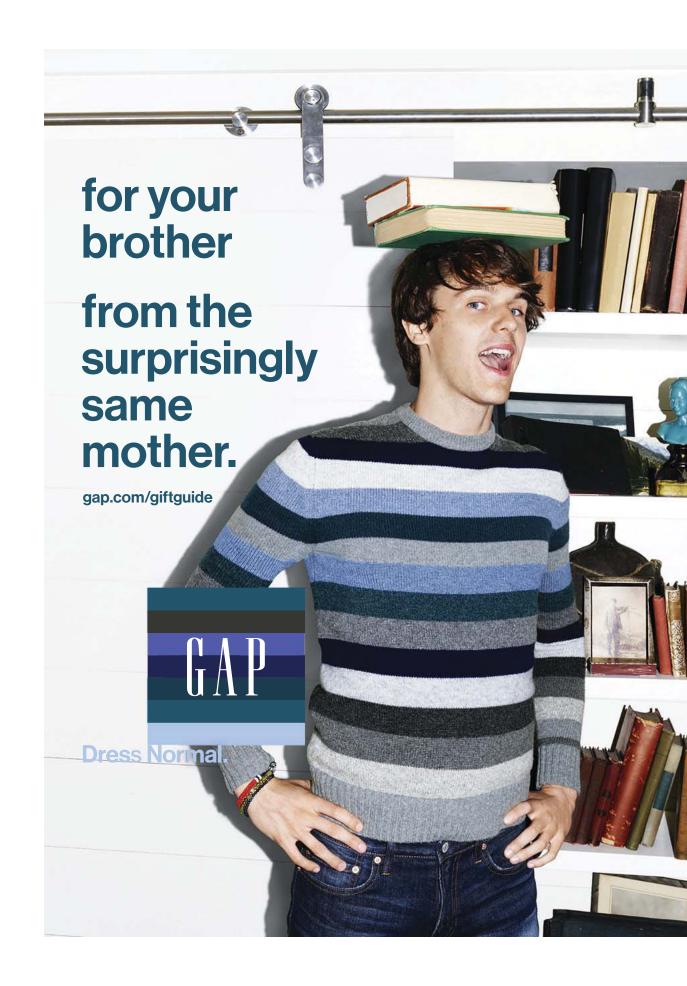
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Q: SHOULD YOU EVEN TRY TO BUY US LINGERIE?

A: Depends. Is the lingerie for you or for her? Here's how to tell: Does the gift in question bear any resemblance to the underthings she either wears or demonstrates a desire to wear? If the answer is no, chances are you're indulging your own fantasy. Which she may actually go along with—for a night. But you're definitely in danger of making a purchase destined for the bottom of a drawer. If the answer is yes, you're both in luck, but you're still not home free. Inspect her lingerie drawer or, if you prefer, her lingerie-clad breasts themselves: How advanced is her support system? There are delicate ballerina-built "bralette" babes and then there are underwire women—usually anyone with a B cup or larger—and at least when it comes to our delicates, never the twain shall meet. Because think about it: Would you cut your T-bone with a butter knife? Top left: Bra (\$140) and panties (\$65) by Stella McCartney; stellamccartney.com. Right: Bra (\$99) and panties (\$78) by Mimi Holliday; mimiholliday.com.



A CASHMERE SWEATER BY EQUIPMENT

Not too fitted, not too loose, not too bulky, not too sheer. The holy grail of cashmere basics, Equipment sweaters reside in almost every *ELLE* editor's closet. They're pillproof and come at a well-worth-it price, in a wide spectrum of shades. (\$268; equipmentfr.com)





SOME EARRINGS BY RYAN STORER

Question: What is this? A) Ear project; B) Ear cuff; C) Ear slinket; D) Ear jacket; E) One pair of earrings

Who cares?! Show that dedicated fashion follower you really are paying attention with a nonmatching set. (\$260 per set; net-a-porter.com)



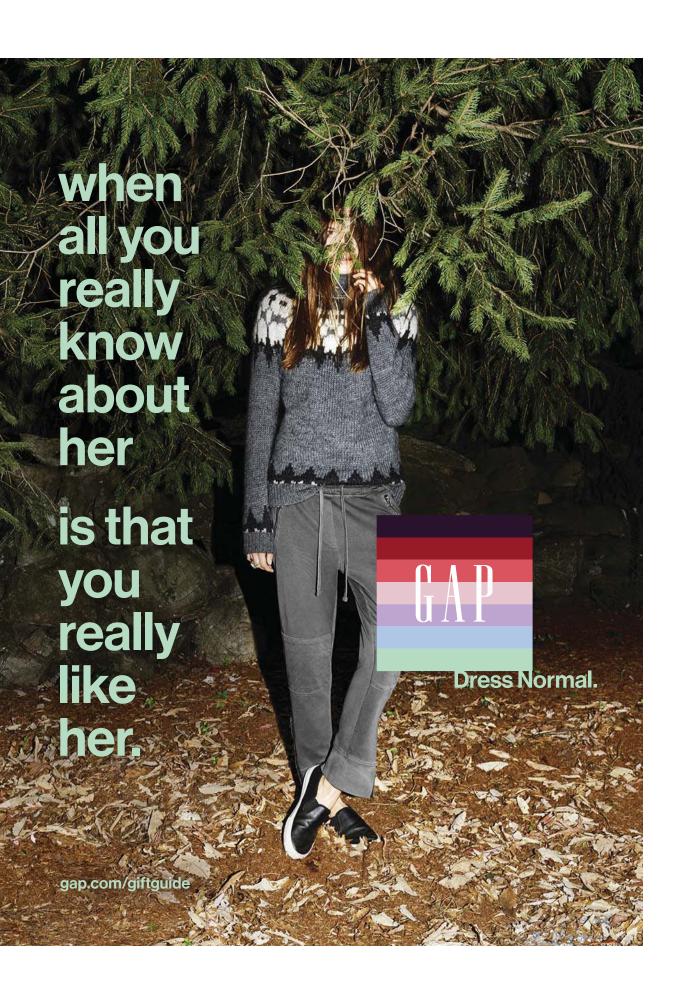
BACKGAMMON SET BY CLARE VIVIER

With this leather roll-up set, L. A.'s cool-girl accessories designer has put her stamp on the definitive throwback couples game. (\$222; clarev.com)



SOME SILK PAJAMAS BY OLIVIA VON HALLE

A pair of truly timeless silk pj's will make her feel as mysterious as Garbo, as ballsy as Hepburn (Katharine), and as ready to romp as circa-1962 Hefner. Best served with breakfast in bed or champagne later on. (\$495; oliviavonhalle.com)









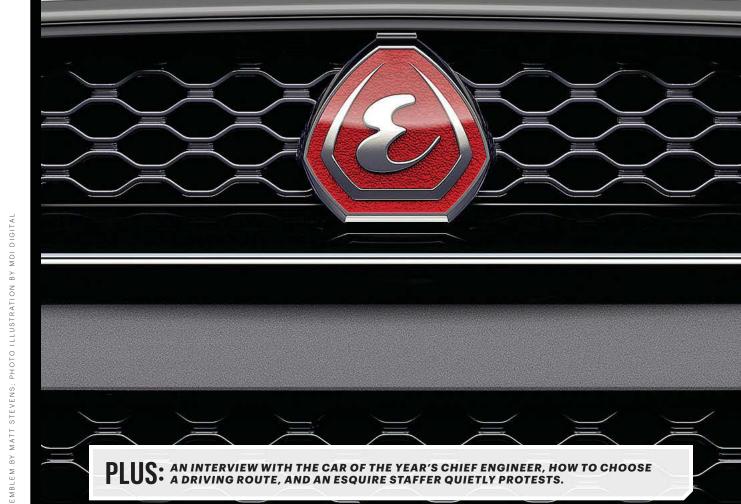




Esquires

WEIRD YEAR FOR CARS. LET'S SEE: THE GREATEST THRILL IS A PLUG-IN HYBRID AND THE BIGGEST WORKHORSE IS A COMPACT HATCH. BUT AFTER WEEKS OF DELIBERATION, A COUPLE HEATED DISCUSSIONS, AND ONE CRISP FALL MORNING TEARING THROUGH A FOREST, WE GOT OUR HEADS AROUND THE CLASS OF 2014 AND FINALLY AGREED ON THE CAR OF THE YEAR.

BY SAM SMITH



PLUS. AN INTERVIEW WITH THE CAR OF THE YEAR'S CHIEF ENGINEER, HOW TO CHOOSE A DRIVING ROUTE, AND AN ESQUIRE STAFFER QUIETLY PROTESTS.



THE ESQUIRE CAR OF THE YEAR

2015 FORD MUSTANG GT

FUNCTIONAL, AFFORDABLE, STYLISH, FUN, WELL BUILT (FINALLY), AND REALLY, REALLY FAST. IT RETAINS THE SOUL THAT MADE IT AN ICON. THERE'S NO OTHER AUTOMOBILE LIKE IT.

One hundred and eighteen years after Henry Ford first clattered around his neighborhood, there are few household names in American cars. You've got your Model T's and your wartime Jeeps and your Chevy Corvettes, none of which need an introduction. And somehow, more widely loved than any of them—its relaunch this year made more headlines than the appearance of the last new Vette—the Ford Mustang.

Legend paints the Mustang as the brainchild of Ford's Lee Iacocca, a sales genius who somehow managed to talk himself onto the covers of *Time* and *Newsweek* in the same week in 1964, the year the car was

NOTES -

ENGINE: 435-HP, 5.0-LITER V-8
• 0 to 60: 4.5 SEC. (EST.) • PRICE:
\$35,420 • MPG: 15 CITY/25 HIGHWAY
This model finally has independent rear
suspension—an acquisition that is just as
much a sea change for Ford as the end of
the space-shuttle program was for NASA.

launched. Iacocca invented modern car marketing here, convincing a nation that his pretty boulevardier was a lust object— a million examples were sold by March of 1966—which is astonishing, because under the skin it was a rebody of the crappy Falcon, with a solid trucklike rear axle.

Fifty years of evolution turned the car into something real. The solid axle stayed, but everything gradually got better. You could always get a tire-smoking V-8, which helped. Countless imitators sprang up, but somehow-and we're not even sure Ford knows why—the car always offered a happy blend of low-buck optimism and an allthings-to-all-people vibe. It was a blank canvas for hot-rodders, a rebellion for quiet office assistants, a small-town Fourth of July parade float, a midlife crisis for any wallet. The sole drawback lay in its low-cost roots and finish, which the car never quite shook. You were either a Mustang person, overlooking that stuff, or you weren't.

And now we have this—the first blank-sheet Mustang since Iacocca. It is everything the old car was and more. The solid axle—the jumpy, jittery, Bowie-knife core of the Mustang's personality—is finally gone, replaced by independent rear suspension. You can still get a V-8 and a six-speed manual, but finally there are no excuses. The base 435-hp GT costs \$32,925, or \$35,420 if you order the optional Per-

formance Pack, which provides stiffer suspension, quicker acceleration, and Brembo brakes. These get you one of the most approachable performance cars on the planet, a thundering bare-knuckle boxer with an astonishingly polished interior and a desperate need to slice up the highway. It eggs you on; it makes you feel like you've accomplished something simply by liking it; it makes you wonder if everything negative about American cars was just a smoke screen created by idiots and navsavers. And there isn't a single thing about it that feels cheap; on the contrary, it could cost twice as much and you'd still feel like you stole it. And like the car itself was egging you on as you tore down the street, burglar alarms ringing in your wake.

It's that feel that matters most. The Esquire Car of the Year must be many things: affordable, stylish, a riot to drive. But above all, it has to make you want it badly and make not owning it seem like a crime. One of last year's stars, the recently revitalized Corvette, reminded us of the power of the home team: The Chevy was a joy to be in and a wonderful car, but it was also astonishing value, well built, and vice-free—everything that we knew Detroit was capable of. The 2015 Mustang is the same idea for more people.







Q&A: Dave PericakThe 2015 Ford Mustang GT Chief Engineer

How to push soul and feeling through at a modern car company, whose climate almost purposely eliminates them

SAM SMITH: How do you start over but keep all the stuff that matters?

DAVE PERICAK: There are so many opinions and so many ideas around what a Mustang has been through the years that you'd have one particular feature, like the hockey stick on the side of the car [the styling "scallop" on the car's flank]. Some people would say, "You can't do a Mustang without a hockey stick." Well, if you look back at our history, the hockey stick wasn't always there.

SS: Every modern car is designed by a group of people. But that means you have a bunch of people on your team who are responsible for how the thing feels, and they may not have fifty years of Mustang history under their belts. Does that mean you sit them down and explain certain things?

DP: Our people actually own them, they track them, they work on them in their garage on the weekends.

SS: Seems like you can do things with a Mustang you can't do with other cars at Ford.

DP: We loved the car that we had, but we all kind of were scratching our heads, going, *There's just something not right*. And we got into the studio and we said, "Put some hips on her." And they did. And the moment we saw it, we all just looked at one another and said, "Yeah, that's what we're gonna do." Well, it was late; it was money we

didn't plan on spending. But the real issue wasn't either of those. The real issue came when we got no feasibility from our staffing team on putting the hips on the car. Believe it or not, the 2015 Mustang was the deepest draw-meaning we're taking a flat piece of metal and we're drawing it the deepest amount of any vehicle at the Ford Motor Company. We're drawing it so deep to get those hips that the part actually did not even fit in the press. And so I had to meet with the vice-president of manufacturing, who told me, "Dave, it doesn't fit in the press. It's not that we don't want to do it for you. It physically doesn't fit." And I said, "Well, then, open the presses up." And he said, "Do you know how much money that's gonna cost?" And I said, "Nope, but I'm sure you're gonna give me the bill. Open the presses up." And he huddled his team, and they went back and made it work, and they opened them up.

SS: How late in the process was that before production?

DP: We were very far down the path. Our underpinnings were already complete, and the upper body was almost finished. So it was really late in the process. But, again, it was something we had to do.

To know that you just put a dream in someone's driveway and in someone's garage, something that they saved all their life for, is the most satisfying thing there is out there. These people love these machines. These people... they name their cars, they build garages for them. This is not a mode of transportation it's a way of life.

SS: And it's a way of life that now involves easy burnouts.

DP: The team got together in my office, and we huddled up and said, "Hey, wouldn't it be cool if we just allowed the customers through the steering-wheel control to do a massive burnout?" And everybody said, "Who the hell's gonna design that?" So we did a little skunk work and we got it together, and it was functioning. So all the guys in the office had heard that I was gonna go demonstrate line lock [which locks the front brakes, letting you easily do a burnout] for the very first time. They all gathered at the track, and I got in the car and did the first line-lock burnout, which turned out amazing. And the team was clapping and cheering and ... when I pulled back up to everybody and the smoke was still clearing, they all looked at me and said. "Only Mustang." Most people don't know how to do a massive burnout. I've had so many customers come up to me and say, "Thank you. You've finally enabled me to do a burnout." And I smile and I think to myself. That's okay. Right? It's okay that you need this feature to do a burnout, because it's iust frickin' cool.

ROUTE

It's a perfect early autumn morning at an undisclosed location upstate, far removed from Esquire's headquarters in midtown Manhattan. The morning sun is slowly burning off a low fog, and there are almost a dozen spotless cars, lined up in a neat row. The Esquire proving grounds, as we'll come to call it, is an all-public road set in rolling hills: seventeen miles and a couple dozen turns in pristine countryside, with whiteknuckle tight turns, hard-braking zones, and floor-stomping straights. At 8:00 A.M. on a Tuesday, there is absolutely no one on these roads except for a bunch of

squirrels and two state-police cars at our starting line, trying to reel in fresh catch from the morning commuters coming in the opposite direction. The large fast snake (turns 2 through 4), is a nice warm-up. Turn 5 is the horseshoe—where all the fun begins. From there, the course is a heavily wooded area with a series of tight turns, a blind drop, and a 90 degree turn past a pristine lake. A couple tight S's into the back straight and you're

COPS START/FINISH SLOW ZONE SMALL LARGE **FAST** SNAKE BACK STRAIGHT CORK-SCREW GREAT HORSESHOE DROP

> really flying, until you hit the small fast snake in turns 20 and 21. Toward the end, you start to slow down, a huge smile on your face and your coworker in front of you, kicking up colorful fall leaves through the dappled sunlight on the road. This is what you want from a public-road route: a stretch of highway, a double-yellow with lots of curves, and something to look at. And solitude. You want to create your own car commercial.



THE CAR THAT GETS YOU THE MOST CAR(S) 2015 VW GOLF GTI

Four doors, gobs of cargo room, sports-car reflexes, adult manners, an interior that belongs in a \$50,000 luxury sedan. Sure, it's just a compact hatch, but it's also a lot like a...

> Pickup truck: 52.7 cubic feet of cargo space with the rear seats folded. No drywall sheets or mattresses, but just about everything else. (Friend of ours once got a full-sized water

heater in one, no lie.)

- > Sensible family sedan: Five seats that fit four grown men. Comfy. And looks the business, unlike your mom's Toyota.
- > Under-the-radar sports car: 220 hp, 0 to 60 mph in 6.4 seconds, 124-mph top speed.* Doesn't sound like much, but people terrorize autobahns with these buggers.

- > Fuel-friendly econobox: 34 mpg when you're nice to it. Not a lot less when you're not. Which is good, because you don't want to be nice to it.
- > Old-school Detroit sled: Great seats + quiet interior = swallows states in an eveblink.
- *Optional Performance Pack, which you want, unless the car is going to your teenage son or daughter, in which case we suggest abstinence. And perhaps a nice, calm Volvo instead.

NOTES -

ENGINE: 220-HP 2.0-LITER • 0 TO 60: 6.4 SEC. • PRICE: \$27,310 · MPG: 25/34



What every Car of the Year contender must possess:

It must be surprising. We must like it more than we thought we would before we got inside it.

When inside the car, it must make us look 2.3 times better than we do outside it.

The door must shut with a sound that makes you think the whole thing is built well. An ooth or maybe a buup.

It must be comfortable to sit in while the car is idling.

It must be fun to drive slowly. (Unless it's the WRX STI on page 119. We forgive a rally car for wanting to be a rally car.)

We must want to drive it again and again.

It must seem like a value. (Unless it's the BMW i8. We forgive the i8 its price tag, because that price includes a window into the future.)

Its differential should be smarter than we are.

Its brakes should stop the earth.

It must value tech. Fuel economy, emissions, safety. You have to move the bar.

It must make us happy.





TRUCK OF THE YEAR

2014 RAM 1500 ECODIESEL

This is where the truck tide turns: a full-sized American pickup with a just-big-enough diesel V-6—the only one of its kind. You get the fuel economy of a small engine, the pulling power of a larger one, and the grumble of a working-class diesel. It used to be that affordable pickups strong enough for real work needed a fire hose full of gasoline aimed at the engine bay. Now you can play fossil-fuel teetotal with some unlikely opponents—most of whom can't haul much drywall.

The Ram 1500 gets 20/28 (two-wheel drive).

Here are a few cars that get worse gas mileage than this beast:

MUSCLE CAR: 2014 Chevrolet Camaro ZL1 (MPG: 12/18)

FAMILY HAULER: 2014 Nissan Quest

(MPG: 19/25)

SMALL FOUR-CYLINDER PICKUP: 2015 Toyota Ta-

coma 2WD (MPG: 21/25)

SMALL SUV: 2014 Jeep Cherokee

4WD (MPG: 19/27) **HYBRID:** 2014 VW Touareg Hybrid (MPG: 20/24)

SPORTS CAR: 2014 Nissan 370Z (MPG: 19/26)

NOTES ▼

ENGINE: 240-HP, 3.0-LITER V-6 • O TO 60: 7.9 TO 8.4 SEC. (EST.) • PRICE: \$35,340 • MPG: 20/28



BEST VALUE

2015 Mazda 3

The hatchback cousin of the Mazda 6 but far better-looking. Graceful fenders and a steamy vibe that doesn't suit an inexpensive car.



BEST VALUE, PART 2

2015 Mazda 6

A four-door budget sedan that is actually fun to drive. No frills, just a great ordinary car. Which we need more of.

BEST SPORTS-CAR AITERNATIVES

Both BMW. Both amazing. A guide to choosing between them.



2015 M3

Midsize sedan. 425 hp, \$62,950. 406 lb-ft of torque at 1850 rpm, which means its tires will turn to dust if you so much as think about turning the electronic nannies off. This is the kind of car that can hang with a supercharged Camaro but does not keep you from getting normal-human things done: There's a backseat with real room and a trunk that is real. Buy it if you like vacations but hate planes, love meat but hate cooking it, and wish you could give your chain saw sentience. The hottest version of BMW's best-selling car, the 3 Series, and the car that arguably made the company's modern reputation for balanced, fast-as-hell, Porscheeating goodness.

OR



2015 M235i

Small coupe. 320 hp, \$44,050. What the 3 Series used to be, in both size and purpose. A ferociously competent coupe—the engine is smooth and predictable, the exhaust hushed, the exterior tastefully underdone. You could put people in the rear seats, but not for long—and not if you really like them. This is the kind of car that gave BMW the reputation it has today—not a giant SUV, not a 400-hp family sedan, but the semi-affordable car that has everything in balance.

Gifts for ...

EVERY GUY ON YOUR LIST



The ultimate gift of time IWC PORTUGUESE CHRONOGRAPH

A traditional line of nautically inspired precision instruments would be incomplete without a chronograph with a quarter-second scale for precision timing. This elegantly designed Portuguese Chronograph makes a stunning gift for anyone who truly values his time. (\$17,500)

IWC.COM

The scent of rock and roll JOHN VARVATOS FRAGRANCE FOR MEN

Modern, bold, and sophisticated, this woody, masculine scent is infused with a refined intrigue. It's a must-have for anyone on your list whose fragrance wardrobe needs an upgrade. (\$84)

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Gift connoisseurs the next level of unrivaled smoothness with DeLeón's new blanco tequila. Exquisite highland agaves are slow-roasted for the ultimate sipping tequila luxuriously bottled in bespoke glass, hand-detailed to perfection. (\$119)

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The ultimate style guide

ESQUIRE BIG BLACK BOOK

It's the gift for the fashionable man who knows how to indulge. Filled with useful information on everything from the proper way to mix the perfect martini to having a custom suit made, it is truly the one resource no modern man should be without.

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The 2015 **Nissan GT-R** Is My Car of the Year

By David Curcurito

The editors won't listen to me, so, as the design director of this magazine, I'm just gonna leave this here.

Don't get me wrong, I love the majority of cars nominated for Car of the Year. I pushed every single one pretty hard and had some thrilling rides. But let's get one thing straight: None of the cars featured on these pages can compete with the 2015 Nissan GT-R. It's an instrument of precision engineering and furious speed, nothing more. It's in another class, and that class is straight-up race car. It doesn't get caught up with things like the Jaguar F-Type's soft-leather interior and tunable exhaust. They're just frivolous. And although the Mustang's allnew independent rear suspension has made it a much better ride (welcome to the twentieth century, by the way), the 545-hp, dual-clutch, all-wheel-drive twin-turbo V-6 (\$103,365) GT-R takes corners with the force of a car meant only for tracks and professional drivers. Congrats, Subaru, for installing a cute new display for navigation and media functions, voice recognition, and blah, blah, blah. In the GT-R, the display will track and record your acceleration, braking, steering, gear position, and, holy shit, your lap time. So go ahead and drive your Volkswagen GTI, BMW M235i, Ram 1500, or Mercedes S-Class over to the Nissan dealership and ask to check one out. And if you have the balls to test-drive it, ask for it by the nickname GT-R heads have called it for years: Godzilla



MOST TERRIFYING SOUND

2015 JAGUAR F-TYPE R COUPE

When a car sounds right, the first drive stays with me forever. Burnished on my eardrums is a 1973 Ferrari Dino blast through Santa Monica; a Porsche 997 GT3 RS pushing the red line on Mulholland Drive; and recently a simple press of the starter button on Jaguar's new F-Type R coupe. I am so taken by the exhaust note that I just sit in a Venice parking lot revving the engine and laughing. It's so loud I'm not even sure it's legal.

There's much more to this Jag than sound, however. It has a 5-liter supercharged V-8 that kicks out 550 horsepower; its exterior styling is aggressive; and the interior control buttons and levers are exactly where I want them to be when I reach for them. It's an athletic two-seater sports car that's getting me waves and thumbs-up from my L.A. road-monkey brethren and, incredibly, nods of approval from my Porsche buddies.

However, it's the active sport exhaust with outboard-mounted quad pipes that's the F-Type R's calling card. Engineers toiled three and a half years tuning it. I had read about sport exhaust before driving the car and still plain the joy of children to single people: They may think they get it, but they won't until the baby comes.

The noise scatters crows in my neighborhood. On Sunset Boulevard, nervous commuters at a bus stop duck for cover. The F-Type R coupe at speed sounds like an angry trombone that spits gunfire. Using a highspeed performance car in a city like L. A. is frustrating. You rarely leave third gear. Scooting up to 45 mph has never been so righteous. -SPIKE FERESTEN

Spike Feresten is the host of Car Matchmaker on the Esquire Network, airing Tuesdays at 9:00 P.M.

NOTES -

ENGINE: 550-HP, 5.0-LITER V-8 • O to 60: 4.0 SEC. • PRICE: \$99,925 • MPG: 16/23 A little expensive for most of us. A little impractical. But what a lovely automobile.



LEAST PRACTICAL—BUT GREAT

2015 Alfa Romeo 4C

At \$55,195, with a carbon-fiber frame, this is the most impractical four-wheeled thing you can buy in this country. No glove box. Barely any carpet or trunk space. Painfully tiny interior, but has Ferrari looks at a 75 percent discount.



SUV OF THE YEAR NOW AND FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE

2015 Cadillac Escalade

The most unapologetic and therefore one of the best machines GM builds. If you need to move stuff and people but don't want a church van, you buy one of these.





My American Handmade Vodka beats the giant "Imports" every day. That's because we distill it six times, use old-fashioned pot stills we built ourselves, and taste test every batch to make sure you get only the best. Try American!



Tito's.

Handmod



Spirit Journal

Unanimous Double Gold Winner!!! World Spirits Competition "America's first craft sippin' vodka"

Wall Street Journal

"Smooth, I mean really smooth!"

CNN



Tito's.

* Titos Vodka.com * Handcrafted to be savored responsibly.







Handmade VODKA

Crafted in an Old Fashioned Pot Still by America's Original Microdistillery

AUSTIN * TEXAS

DISTILLED & BOTTLED BY FIFTH GENERATION, INC. AUSTIN, TX. 40% ALCAVOL



RIDE OF THE YEAR

2015 MERCEDES-BENZ S-CLASS S550

For much of the last century, you could ID a big Mercedes by what wasn't there: no gimmicks, just a hundred-year build quality and a nose like the prow of the *Bismarck*. Uncle Mort's '57 Cadillac had a minibar in the glove box? The best Mercedes of that year had mind-altering panel fit and doors that shut like God stamping His feet. The newest S-Class rolls with the gadgety times—the heated armrests, the actively perfumed interior with replaceable fragrance pots—but the build quality is still there, as is the company's dedication to tech, which works so well everyone else can't help but adopt it. Past S-Classes pioneered the use of antilock brakes, electronic stability control, and a zillion other things now found in every car from Buicks to Bugattis. You're driving the future, but the cabin is so hushed and machine-art adult, you barely feel like you're moving. (Exhibit A: an optional stereoscopic camera that watches the road and automatically softens the suspension for bumps. Exhibit B: autonomous cruise control. The car can steer and brake for you on mind-numbing highways.)

Mercedes-Benz has been making automobiles since 1886 and this machine for less than a year. But the S-Class is everything a century of carmaking will teach you. It makes you relax, no matter what you have going on. \$95,325? Cheap.

NOTES ▼

ENGINE: 449-HP, 4.7-LITER V-8 • **O TO 60:** 4.8 SEC. • **PRICE:** \$95,325 • **MPG:** 17/26



SEDAN OF THE YEAR 2015 Hyundai Genesis

Finally looks like a big-boy car. Drives almost like the German competition and has a similar trim, but at a base price of \$38,950, costs gobs less. Good looks a bonus.



PORSCHES OF THE YEAR

2015 911 Targa 4 & Turbo

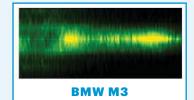
The Targa 4 (above) has a folding roof that can stop traffic; the Turbo has a 520-hp twin-turbo six that stops time. Your choice between the two correlates with your speeding-ticket budget.

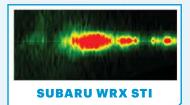


HOW WE ACTUALLY DRIVE

According to a machine that tracks our every brake and acceleration

For years, Esquire has been writing about what you drive. This year, we asked Automatic to help us shed light on how you drive. Automatic tracks cars through your phone's GPS and a small hundred-dollar device that plugs into the car's data port. The application provides long-term feedback and immediate chirp alerts, which tell drivers if they're braking, accelerating, or speeding too much. According to chief product officer Ljuba Miljkovic, most users spend around a third less on gas once they start driving more efficiently by applying what they learn. "We can give you honest feedback in a nonjudgmental way," Miljkovic says. Apparently, people pay more attention when a robot critiques their driving.





We used Automatic's driver data (about ten million miles per month) to check on the habits of people who drive two of our favorite cars. In these charts, the green slope at the bottom shows how often the drivers brake at each speed; the green slope at the top shows how often the drivers accelerate at each speed. Red indicates if drivers spend more of their time at a certain speed. The red areas in the Subaru chart occur at higher speeds, indicating its drivers have heavier feet. The predominantly green area in the BMW M3 chart indicates its drivers tend to be more reckless. Looks like your stereotypes were accurate.

-JENNINGS BROWN

The Closest You're Gonna Get to a Rally Racer: 2015 Subaru WRX STI

Cars like the 305-hp STI are built for rally racing, with sophisticated all-wheel drive and compact turbo power trains. Plus, a cockpit unintelligible to the layman.

1. Throttle-percentage gauge: How much gas you're giving it.

2. Turbo-boost gauge: Air pressure being forced into the engine by the turbocharger. (More is better.)

3. Multifunction- display toggle:Toggles through multiple-function displays. But you knew that.

4. Electronic stability-control switch: Turns the car's electronic nannies off—the software that keeps you from sliding into a ditch but also slows you down.

5. Steering wheel: Aids in ditch avoidance.

6. SI-drive knob: Changes engine responsiveness. "Sport Sharp" is angriest. You pretty much always want Sport Sharp.

7. Center-differential controls: Varies engine-torque distribution in the all-wheel-drive system; changes cornering balance; helps make bigger doughnuts.

8. Reverse-gear lockout ring: Keeps you from accidentally going backward in the heat of battle.









NOTES -

ENGINE: 305-HP, 2.5 LITER I-4 • O TO 60: 5.0 SEC. • PRICE: \$35,290 • MPG: 17/23



THE FUTURE OF CARS

2014 BMW i8

There's a lot of special here, but most important is the fact that this is the first mass-produced car made of carbon fiber, which is around 50 percent lighter than steel and makes the car strong enough to do almost anything. The hitch is it's heinously expensive and time-consuming to make. Lighter cars mean greater

efficiency for the same power output, so if you can figure out how to affordably massproduce the stuff, you'd clear the biggest hurdle in the way of green cars.

Several years ago, BMW decided to try. The Bavarians spent much of the i program's around \$3 billion cost-to-date figuring out how to make carbon fiber by the truckload—and fast. They mortgaged the company's future, diverted engineers, and built a hydropowered plant in Washington State to manufacture the fiber in the quantities needed. Amazingly, they pulled it off.

There are other plug-in carbon hybrids, but they're built in tiny numbers, cost around \$1 million, and have thirsty

race-inspired engines. (See the Porsche 918, the McLaren P1, and the Ferrari La-Ferrari.) The i8 throws that stuff out the window and says a car like this can be affordable, paving a tech road to the masses. It has a 1.5-liter three-cylinder under the rear deck, as does the 2014 Mini Cooper, but the BMW is about as fast as a Porsche 911, a relatively light car that doesn't have to haul around a battery pack or electricdrive motors. And the best part is when the i8 rips, snorts, whines, and yawps its way through the gears, waking up every single hair on the back of your neck, you don't care about the story. You're just thrilled the thing exists. 12

NOTES ▼

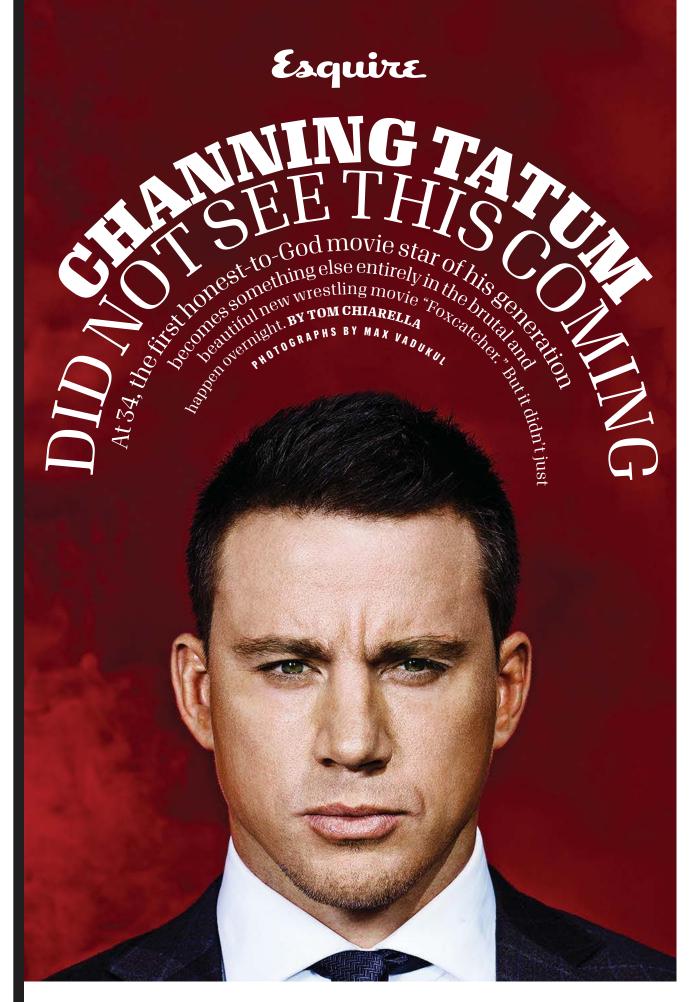
ENGINE: 357-HP, 1.5-LITER I-3 • 0 to 60: 4.0 SEC. • PRICE: \$136,650 • MPG: 76 COMBINED (ELECTRIC AND GAS) HERE'S THE THING: Woman in a Subaru Forester pulls up and asks, "Is that an i8?!" She walks around the car, accepts our offer to sit in it, and then gets out and stands next to her Forester and says, "I just want to watch it drive away."



THE NEW 2015 DODGE



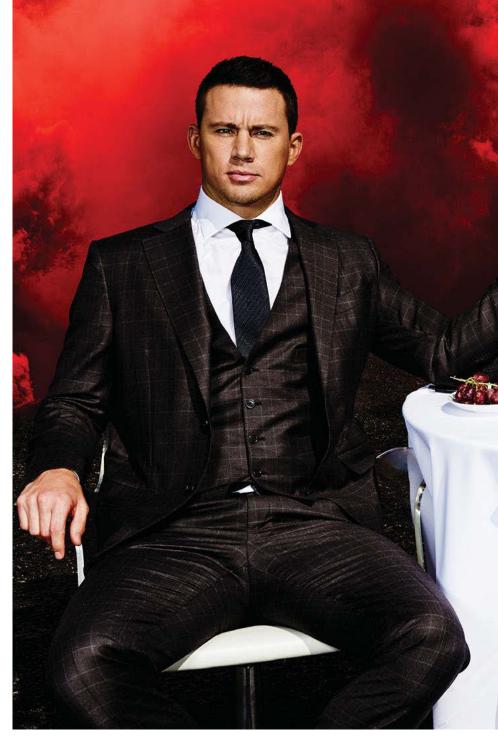
THEIR SPIRIT LIVES ON



A crab shack called the Crab Shack, on a coastal island in Georgia. The young waitress sets a plate of blue crabs and a ramekin of clarified butter on the table. And even though he surely knows that there are so many crabs in the world's restaurants now that a single steaming plate of them ought not feel like a high holy day, Channing Tatum treats the food like an arrival, rumbling up his enthusiasm. "Oh yeah," he says. "That's right. That's them, right there." Chan to his friends, thirty-four years old, his baseball hat turned backward, tilted, metallic sticker still plastered against the underside of the brim,

emphasizes the words in a way in which every syllable is accented. That's them, right there. Boom-boom, boom-boom. Dance beat. A little trochaic resonance under the arching ceiling formed by an ancient tangle of live oaks. And Tatum-the first honest-to-God movie star of his generation, one half of Jump Street, the engine and inspiration of Magic Mike, and one of the stars of Foxcatcher, the new drama about freestyle wrestling and murder-curls his fingers, raises a fist like he might be blowing a little horn, and speaks into it in a fake shout-out: Blue crab in the Crab Shack. That is what it is all about. He sounds so happy, laughing at the little orgy of the moment: crabs, night, rain, Yankees game on a Dixie flatscreen above the bar. Jeter. At his end, with no one watching from these quarters. And none of that rain getting through the branches above. His eyes on the rough, steaming blue-green hides, which is to say eyes down. A joyous and conspiratorial gaze that says Crabs, motherfucker! Crabs!

Then, with two little turns of the plate, the waitress orients all of



them-eight, maybe nine crabs-facing me. They are mine. In front of Tatum, she places a single chicken breast, with the skin still on. He tugs at that skin, disappointed: He ordered it skinless. The waitress fills his water and asks, Barbecue sauce, maybe? "No, no," he says, voice sunk, eyes down. "This is really fine. I'm like T-minus Idon't-know-what to being naked all the time." The sequel to Magic Mike starts shooting here, in Savannah, within a week, and he's dieting and working out like mad to cut the last little bit of weight that a thirty-four-year-old might reasonably carry naturally. "It's ... what I'm doing," he says to her of the impending nakedness. "It's what I do." He squints, then green-eyes her a bit from under his brow so that she gets it.

The waitress gives me a brief lesson on eating crab: "Don't eat the lungs. Pick a starting point, and don't put it down until you get what you wanted."

And right there, Tatum purses his lips and nods. "Don't eat the



lungs." And turning his fork in little wheel rotations in the air, speaking as if mainly to himself, he says: "You gotta make a plan." The waitress giggles. Everything he says delights her.

"I would like to join you," he says, gesturing to my plate. "I would like a beer. I would like to have some crab. I love eating. But this is what I'm doing right now." And so, without comment or complaint, he begins to pick at the back of his chicken breast, and with his cheek full of chicken meat, me cracking and forking, he storytells his rise from lost boy to exotic dancer to fashion model, from soft-drink commercials to movie franchises and an Oscar-worthy film in which he himself is Oscar-worthy. He rolls out his childhood in Mississippi, adolescence in Florida, twenties in California, stories of how he moved from one little mess of trouble to another. And in the span of his story, as I do my damage to these crabs, Tatum barely moves, his T-shirt and hoodie hanging on his bones, his stillness a rebuke to the awesome physicality that has fueled his ascent. He

eats about half of one chicken breast. With water. The stripper's diet. The wrestler's diet. Sore in muscle and bone, dizzy with hunger, all in service to the upcoming nakedness. It's not that bad, he says. It's what he's doing.

EVENINTHEEARLYDAYS

in Pascagoula, he had size. He always heard people—other kids, their parents, his mother's friends—saying he was getting big, repeating it like a headline from a paper, because it was news: *Chan Tatum's getting some size!* And he thought a lot about speed—about not being fast enough to catch someone and also not being fast enough to get away if he needed to. His father, a former football player himself, worried openly about his speed. Football was big in their house. And so he'd run, place to place, one sports practice to another, building up speed. He thought better when he ran. It filled him up, gave him

a feeling of being busy. Years later, when he'd ask his mom Was I a bad kid? she'd answer: You weren't bad, you were just...busy.

On the way to school in the morning, which he submitted to mostly out of consideration for his mother, Tatum allowed himself to entertain the idea of playing football in college. Especially at Alabama, where he was born and for whom he and his father always rooted. And once in school, he stared out the windows of the classroom, beyond the lawn, over the road. Work itself, the entire possibility and promise of it, was out there. For a time, he knew that his father was out there, over the tops of some houses, near some freeway, on the roof of a bungalow, resting his weight on the two-by he nailed down to hold himself, working, telling stories to the other men, pulling back the ancient ceiling of the unthinkably hot skin of another unimportant rooftop. But for now, behind the windows of his school, with its rules and painful quietude and everything smelling like shoes, farts, wet trees, he was sure of only one thing: School did not hold him. The diagnosis of ADHD did not hold him. The medication they gave him did not hold him. In the afternoons, free of school, he spent untold hours with his martial-arts instructor, a master, tracing shapes in the air until he could feel them notched into the outside of his arms. Until he could feel them without conscious thought. "It wasn't complicated," he remembers. "I learned to appreciate repetition. That's why I can dance. It's how I learned to act. I have a high tolerance for repetition. And for the first time in my life, I was busy enough that I didn't want to stop until I got it right. That never happened in school for me. Not once."

His family left Mississippi for Tampa when he was in his early teens, and Florida was not Mississippi: nothing to absorb the brightness, no shadows, really, no diesel cloud from the barges, no paper mill, no river. His mom worked for an airline as his dad recovered from a career-ending fall at work, and she drove him back to Mississippi regularly to finish his studies with his martial-arts master. The road, a hot asphalt crescent, eight hours each way, the two of them together, hauling up the Gulf Coast to Mississippi, all in order for him to stay busy. But eventually the drive became too much for her, and Tatum found himself alone in the afternoons in a normal house ("front yard, backyard, pool") in Tampa. With so many girls in shouting distance. Trouble. "It's the best city in America for fourteen-year-olds with parents who work," he says. "There was always some place to go, some house to go into, some alley to go down, roof to climb around, or fence to jump." On so many Saturdays after his games, while visiting girls—on front porches and street corners, in parks and bodegas, at bus stops and beaches—he found he still needed to move, so he learned to dance the same way he learned nearly everything else-by doing. "I wanted to dance," he says. "I just didn't



know anything. Neither did the girls I was seeing. But their moms did. I figured out the fastest way for me to learn to dance was to grab up some abuela and get her moving on the porch." And Tatum, big as he was at fifteen, looking like a man, really, floated around in the soupy summer heat, the music getting turned up from inside, with all these women.

He kept his imagination engaged, stayed busy with his hips, swinging his way to exhaustion, repeating. It's how he got through football practice, and it's how he got into exotic dancing. Forced onstage during his first audition at a club in Tampa, he started in with what he never learned in school: observation, improvisation, athleticism, discipline, and repetition. That and, one imagines, some control over incipient sexual arousal. But this goes unsaid.

that no one really remembers. Tatum uses his size and his most intense self, his darkest stare, to portray the pain of Mark Schultz, twotime Olympian, two-time world freestyle champion, who took to training for a rich man (played by a wonderfully weird Steve Carell) and his money. It is the best role Tatum's ever been offered and the best he's ever played. The director, Bennett Miller, offered it to him after watching the underrated 2006 drama A Guide to Recognizing Your Saints, in which Tatum played a neighborhood bully in mid-1980s Queens: brutally loyal, equally brutalized, sweet, and violent. "I saw him in that," Miller says, "and immediately offered him the part in Foxcatcher, which was still years away. And in that time, Channing's career took him directions that moved him away from the thing that caught my eye. But it took about six years from the time I offered him the role to get the movie made, and in that time there was never anybody that I ever wanted for the part other than Channing."

From the time he was officially cast in early 2012, Tatum learned to wrestle-single-legs, suplexes, head-and-arm throws. It was all new to him. "I no longer consider myself a practitioner of martial arts," he says. "But wrestling is nothing like that, anyway. In wrestling, there is no retreat. No way to slow things down. In wrestling, you advance and advance, and being tired is just a lie to make the other guy think he can relax. It's so hard, harder than anything I've ever done."

His costar and training partner, Mark Ruffalo, was a wrestler in high school, and they went through the ringer darkly together. (They also open the film with a choreographed warm-up ritual that is balletic in its precision and intimacy.) "No doubt there's an element of misery, and we felt that. But Channing is unrelenting and unyielding. He went right through. And he created that intensity with his eyes, his body, this presence."

To prepare, Tatum also studied with Schultz himself, training with



him, eating with him. "I'll tell you the truth," Tatum says of the man he plays. "He's even intense when he eats eggs. He's still scary to get on the mats with. My third or fourth time wrestling, there I am with this technician of the sport, an all-time great, a really violent wrestler who can bend me in half pretty easily. He did, too. Crushed me."

Tatum adopted Schultz's damaged hopalong walk, his iron stare, the muscle-torn upper-body strength. "What I did was really work on imitating him, from his walk to his neck rolls. I tried to get myself to fit inside that. Everything in him looks a little shredded and like it hurts, but no one will ever know how much." (Imitation is something acting teachers often teach an actor to avoid in the characterization of real people, but then Tatum never bothered much with acting lessons.) This is the Channing Tatum way: He teaches himself, gains weight, gains muscle. When his wife, Jenna Dewan Tatum, visited him on location outside Pittsburgh, with its western Pennsylvania rain and the inky, dark maleness of the wounded souls pulling each other by the collar, the ankle, the knee, she knew it was no place to stick around. "I'm doing you no good here," she told Tatum, who has loved her since they met during the making of his first dance movie—Step Up—eight years ago. Then she left and Tatum was alone again, inside the part.

WHENTATUM SAYS "SCHOOL DIDN'T HOLD ME," PEOPLE COULDN'T

but that's not why he left a little college in West Virginia toward the end of his freshmen year, after missing out on a football scholarship to Wake Forest because of academic reasons. "I had no plan with football," he says. "No commitment. I don't think I even loved the sport anymore, and my mind was never on classes. I needed to reset myself." He moved back to Tampa, then eventually out to L. A. without a plan, without any obvious route or goal. No degree or acting experience. "I didn't do much when I first got there. I was a roofer for a while. It was mostly long days and hours, and hours at night spent in dance clubs. I mostly learned to dance by hanging out in clubs and grinding on girls. Women, cars, alleys. Fun one night, then ugly, too. Then I started modeling. And the travel schedule, the food, the demands brought things together for me. That was a full day, with expectations every day. I'd never had that. Suddenly, every hour of the day was accounted for. Busy. And I never want to be without that again."

Abercrombie and American Eagle, Armani and Dolce & Gabbana: Modeling, a career that has brutalized so many actors before they



crossed over, ended up stabilizing his life and opening doors. "I met people, made contacts," he says, "and started to be taken more seriously." He moved into commercials and began auditioning for roles in movies that played to his type—jocks, dancers, rebels, soldiers, bullies, crushes-and soon there were offers, small parts first, like a high school basketball player in Coach Carter, with Samuel L. Jackson, in 2005. And by his fourth movie (A Guide to Recognizing Your Saints) or his twelfth movie (G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra) or his twenty-first (Magic Mike), people started walking out of theaters saying, That guy. That guy is smarter than I thought. That guy is pretty cool. Charming. Funny. Hot. They liked his looks. His looks would always matter, even when it was about his size, his speed. No one much debated his looks, so he came to forget them. And it happens years later that Tatum-trouble as a kid, trouble as a teenager, trouble as a college dropout—becomes a movie star like Steve McQueen, only nice. A guy without a plan, groomed by no one to do anything, except work. And work some more. He makes action movies bearable, comedies sharper. And even if, as Bennett Miller says, Step Up



and *G.I. Joe* moved him away from the kind of critical validation that says *he can really act, Foxcatcher* is a correction, the breakaway moment, a role crafted by mingling brooding silence and the metered physical explosion of anger and sport. And maybe he won't win any awards for it, but that does not mean he shouldn't.

<u>BACK AT THE</u> CRAB SHACK.

Tatum, in his many parts—star, cowriter, part-time choreographer, producer of *Magic Mike XXL*—describes the long days that make up his life at the moment: rewriting the final draft with his writing partner every morning. Taking his fifteen-month-old daughter for shell hunts before dinner. Dance rehearsals twice a day, "once by myself and once with the group." And what are those like, naked dance rehearsals? He grins: "There are a lot of apologies. A lot of 'I'm sorry that ran into your chin' and 'Let me take my thigh off your neck.'"

The rewriting continues just a few days before the shoot begins.

"When we sit down, we're really writing," he says. "My partner and I make wholesale changes. As needed. Today, tomorrow. That's why I'm the producer, too. So we have permission to screw up the whole thing every day."

"We write to the very last second," says Reid Carolin, Tatum's writing partner. "We read the script aloud, we retool scenes. Chan delivers the changes to the director and the cinematographer, works them out again. Then he goes into the gym to work out and I get my laptop, sit on the heavy equipment, and we start working more while he's lifting."

"I've got a complication for you," I say, in the way of a story pitch. "What about a male stripper who's really worried about a small penis? Would that be a good complication?"

Tatum laughs. "Yeah. Actually, no."

"But it seems like it would be a real-world problem."

He stops then, clears his throat, and does the thing where he slides his chin forward as if he were speaking to someone in authority: "I don't think a person in that position would be attracted to the life of a stripper." But he is the authority, not me, so I listen.

And in listening, I hear his stories, his history, his adventures. He likes everywhere he's ever been-every phase, every fad, every quirk of life in the fringes of large American cities. He makes being a latchkey kid in lower-middle-class Tampa sound like a picaresque novel. He makes dancing, basically naked, basically solely for the hooting pleasure of a drunken ever-changing horde of dollar-bill-toting MILFs, sound like Saturday Night Fever. And while I'm listening, I grab my last crab end-to-end and split it with one hand. It crumbles a little, then snaps open and sprays Tatum with a spritz of crab juice straight in his million-dollar philtrum, lips and all. It's like, "One day Ruffalo and I decided to cut as much weight as we could, like these guys do, and we're riding bikes, and..." and splat, sprayed with crab boil. To

the credit of his everlasting graciousness, Tatum plays it off, pretends he doesn't notice. He blinks one time to register something. A reset, the merest of pauses, barely registering before he continues: "... running, jumping rope, in and out of the saunas."

He keeps on. He is so willing to bear with discomfort, so decent as to not make the moment larger than it is, and why not say it, so nice that he wants me to pretend with him that I didn't just slime him. I have to interrupt him. "Hey," I tell him. "I don't care how polite you are. I just hit you with crab. That was terrible. I'm really sorry."

He breathes out and laughs. He knocks a little piece of shell off his eyebrow. "This happens with crab," he says, wiping his face. And then he works up a one-liner, so this can be laughed off: "It's all right. At least I got some crab." Then he tries again: "Or at least I got a taste." He's cool with it, so I stop my cringing and Tatum picks up where he left off, he and Ruffalo torturing themselves a little in order to believe more in what they do. There he is again: Channing Tatum, crouched over and hungry on the edge of the dark Atlantic Ocean, rewriting his work and himself to the very last. 18

THE MILLENNIUM AT 15

Surprisingly—fifteen years into a new century that has seen tragedy follow trauma follow disaster—the leadership class that has come of age during that time is relentlessly optimistic and giddily hopeful

BYTOM JUNOD

t the dawn of the twenty-first century, Alexis Ohanian gave a speech at his high school graduation. He wasn't valedictorian, but he went to a high school that allowed its students to audition to speak, and he earned a place at the podium. As a speaker, he was both charming and insufferable, smartalecky and painfully sincere—the kind of smart kid who looks like he thinks his speech is going to get him laid. But there was also something precociously authoritative about his insistence that he and his classmates were going to have obligations and opportunities the world had never seen before, simply by virtue of chronology. ¶ "There's no past class for us to compare to, no bar for us to raise, no standard for us to aspire to. No—we are the first class of the millennium. The outcome of this graduating class will depend on only ourselves.... Live up to the name, Class of the Millennium. The only future we have is that which we make for ourselves...." ¶ Three months later, when Ohanian was just starting his freshman year at the University of Virginia, the planes came, and the new millennium declared itself in the spectacle of collapse. War began, and never ended; history took a turn and kept turning, as if intent upon grinding every last American assumption to dust. It was the kind of historical pivot that is particularly hard on commencement speeches, especially those that flatter their

INTRODUCING THE ESQUIRE REGISTER 2015

Thirty-seven people thirty-five and under who have shaped and are now shaping the new millennium

BY THE EDITORS

Illustrations by Michael Gillette



Alexis Ohanian, 31

He started Reddit with a friend nine years ago, and now it's the dominant media hub for everyone under thirty (fifty-six billion page views last year). And he's become one of our most outspoken champions of free speech: "My entire career has been built on the understanding that I am not the smartest person in the room," he says. (Plus, he looks good in a suit. See page 154.)

listeners by telling them they have the power to make their own futures. Ohanian's speech would have been rendered a quaint memory—an expression of blinkered innocence marked with chuckles and rue at a tenth reunion, if remembered at all-if he had not met a guy across the hall named Steve Huffman and created Reddit.

Now you can watch Ohanian's speech on YouTube. Now he de-



Tavi Gevinson, 18

Founder-at age fifteen-and current editor of the online magazine Rookie, a virtual campfire around which her fellow digital-native teen women can ask their elders (see the "Ask a Grown Man" videos) and peers how to flirt, cry, look, crush on, fart, ignore, grow older, and, maybe most important, question. Also: a damn good young actor acclaimed for her performances in last year's Enough Said and in the current revival of This Is Our Youth on Broadway.

livers TED Talks, produces podcasts, and writes books-but, in essence, he never stops giving the speech he gave at Howard High School in 2001. He never stops extolling the members of his generation, he never stops evangelizing for their unique opportunities, he never stops trying to inspire them to do what he did; hell, as a partner in Y Combinator, he never stops trying to give them money to do what he did-to walk across the hall, engage in what he calls "permissionless innovation," and thereby inoculate themselves against the virus of history.

avi Gevinson was five. She was called into an assembly at school. She was confused. She didn't know why there was an assembly for a plane crash.

Matt Rogers was, like Alexis Ohanian, a freshman in college. Sam Altman and Ezra Klein and Leslie Dewan were in high school. They had all experienced the nineties the way baby boomers had experienced the fiftiesas a golden time, silly with prosperity and unquestioned security, sex scandals standing in for poodle skirts and bouffant hairdos. When they watched the buildings fall on television, their

response was straight out of a Tori Amos song: "This is not really happening." But it was; you bet your life it was—it was happening to them. "It was the first time I realized that the world could be truly awful," says Leslie Dewan, twenty-nine. "For a lot of people in my generation—we realized that things can be very bad and wondered, How can we come out of this?"

Laverne Cox had not been long in New York. She had staved out late, at a club. It was fashion week, and there had been an afterparty. "My roommate woke me up and I woke up to 9/11. I lived on West Seventy-fifth Street, and I remember being able to go to the corner of Seventy-fifth and Amsterdam and even that far up was smoke. You could see the smoke from the Twin Towers that had fallen down. It was a really scary time. But then it's always been a really scary time for me, as a black trans woman in America."

And **Edward Snowden**, now thirty-one, on that day happened to be at Fort Meade, where the NSA has its headquarters. He was eighteen; he was already using his computer skills to do piecework from home, and he was delivering work to one of his clients. "I got there and the base was being evacuated. They were going to put it on lockdown, so I had to leave. I was driving through the NSA parking lot-long before I had any association with the NSA-and it was like a different world. It was a madhouse, evervone trying to leave at the same time, when that's probably the one place where they should have stayed."

Tavi Gevinson is now eighteen; she has already outgrown her first life, as a twelve-year-old fashion blogger, and her second, as editor in chief of Rookie magazine, in order to act in movies and on Broadway. Matt Rogers worked on the teams that brought

the iPod and the iPhone to fruition for Apple and then cofounded Nest, which is attempting a largescale technological update of the American home. Sam Altman, twenty-nine, cofounded Loopt, the social-networking app, and now is a partner in Y Combinator. Ezra Klein figured out how to use the Internet for political journalism and then launched Vox.com. Leslie Dewan has designed a new kind of nuclear reactor. **Laverne Cox** plays a transgender prisoner on Orange Is the New Black and is the first transgender actress to be nominated for an Emmy. And Edward Snowden has exposed not only the extent of the NSA's surveillance of American citizens but also the extent to which information now determines the balance of power between the individual and the state. It isn't even a balance of power so much as it is a balance of vulnerability, with power as easily undermined as it is projected. If the surprise of 9/11 was that it didn't take



Ezra Klein, 30

From his first days blogging about politics as a teenager, Klein went on to launch and run Wonkblog at The Washington Post, which made him a star. But then, taking a gamble that his personal brand was more valuable than his ties to a giant legacy media outlet, he quit to start his own richly funded explanatory news site, Vox.com, earlier this year.

much for those buildings to go down, the surprise of what Snowden revealed was that it didn't take much for the NSA to know everything about us, or for us to know everything about the NSA.

In September 2001, Raj Chetty was a grad student; he is now, at thirty-five, a MacArthur fellow and a professor of economics at Harvard. He came to the United States from India when he was nine; he became an American by dint of dislocation. For



Laverne Cox (The Honorary Millennial*)

She started out, as you'd expect, bullied, growing up transgendered in Mobile, Alabama. Attempted suicide at eleven. Got into performance after that to help her cope. Moved to New York. Picked up stray roles. Played a prostitute seven times. Appeared on I Want to Work for Diddy in 2008, which made her the first trans woman on an American reality TV show. Broke through playing Sophia Burset on Orange Is the New Black, which made her the first trans woman to be nominated for an acting Emmy and then the first to get the cover of Time magazine. She is both of the times and dragging them doggedly forward, heartened by the progress and still pissed by how far there is to go. *Cox's age is a closely guarded secret, with estimates ranging from somewhere in her early

thirties to around forty.

t ct

Matt Rogers, 31

First he developed the software for the iPod and the iPhone at Apple. Then he did the unthinkable and quit to cofound a company that develops...thermostats—smart ones you can control with your phone, but still. Everyone thought he was nuts. Then Google bought Nest for \$3.2 billion, and now we're all suddenly checking out old *Jetsons* episodes on YouTube to get a sense of what we're in for.

him, 9/11 could not count as a formational experience; no global event could. It was, instead, a confirmational experience, a violent articulation of what he'd intuited—that he'd come from a new country to a much older one, whose debts were coming due. The questions that the United States asked in regard to history have always been, in Chetty's words, "How are we shaping history and to what extent can we control what happens? You have always felt like you had some degree of control. 9/11 was one of the first indications that that might not always be the case."

The experience of getting that indication is what all the people

interviewed for this essay share. But in many ways it's *all* they share. They speak of 9/11; then their language of historical reference turns into a Babel of individualized tongues. They hold a lot of things in common, but history is simply not one of them. 9/11 is always there, unavoidable, an expulsion from Eden that doubled as a Declaration of Independence. It is no surprise—it's inevitable—that it's their first historical touchstone. What's surprising is that their first touchstone is also, in many cases, their last.

n January 20, 1961, John F. Kennedy became president of the United States. It was a cold day, with snow on the ground, and Kennedy wore a long black coat. But he didn't wear a hat. He was the first president to

have been born in the twentieth century. At forty-three years old, he was at pains to project an image of youthful vigor, in keeping with the generational theme of his Inaugural Address.

Of course, Kennedy was not the only man to take a crack at defining what made his own generation special or the fact of its arrival momentous. From the beginning of recorded history, human beings united by nothing more than the accident of their birthday have tried to characterize their own generation and have bristled at having their generation characterized. Kennedy, however, didn't simply make a claim for himself and his contemporaries; in one memorable sentence he was able to say what formed them, and made them ready for leadership.

"Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans—born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage—and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world."

Born, tempered, disciplined, proud, unwilling, committed—those were strong words even then, but they were appropriate to a generation that had grown up during the Depression and come of age in battle. What are the words appropriate to the generation exem-

plified by the Esquire Register, the thirty-seven people thirty-five years of age and under who are enumerated on these pages? What would Kennedy's formulation sound like today? Certainly there has been no shortage of character-building traumas to go around over the last fifteen years. Indeed, historical events have unfolded like a series of blows, each one perfectly calibrated to shake some cherished American faith: Bush—Gore. Afghanistan. Iraq. Abu Ghraib. Hurricane Katrina. Lehman Brothers. Deepwater Horizon. WikiLeaks. Virginia Tech. Hurricane Sandy. Newtown. The Boston Marathon. ISIS. Ebola. No one needs to ex-

"See, that's the thing. People don't give a fk. If it's not really fully affecting their life, people don't care. You know what headline made me fkin' shed a tear last year? The release date for Grand Theft Auto V. That's the headline that got me excited."

—Tyler, the Creator

plain this litany or dig up the details; it's shorthand for what was at stake all along—and what has always been at stake is nothing less than the assumptions of American fairness, American wisdom, American honesty, American goodness, American equality, American competence, American might, American safety, and American impregnability.

There have been the occasional celebrations, like the ones that followed the first election of Barack Obama and the ad hoc execution of Osama bin Laden. But history has provided the generation that came of age in the twenty-first century with all the justification it could possibly need for pessimism and cynicism. Which is what makes the people chosen for the Esquire Register here all the more surprising:

They are neither pessimistic nor cynical.

They are optimists who believe that there has never been a bet-

2000

The New Age

Almost from its inception, the twenty-first century has been defined by upending events and breathtaking change



BUSH V. GORE



THE MILLENNIUM AT 15

ter time to be alive than right now-who echo Kennedy's doubt that "any of us would exchange places with any other people or any other generation." They bring to mind nothing so much as what Tom Wolfe blurted out in 1965, when he sat on a panel at Princeton and listened to his counterparts going on about America becoming a police state: "What are you talking about? We're in the middle of ... a happiness explosion!"

It was a shocking thing to say in 1965 and even more shocking now. We are in the middle of a happiness explosion. Hell, according to Ezra Klein, the world is in the middle of a happiness explosion. "The last fifteen years have been a very rough fifteen years for the United States," he says, "and arguably the fifteen best years in the planet's entire history.... I'm sorry, I

should say that differently: in the human race's entire history. Americans are seeing failures and threats and institutional catastrophes routinely at the same time as people all over the world are seeing absolutely never-beforeknown increases in prosperity, in the quality of their institutions, in the likelihood that they will live a happy and successful life."

It is all, Klein says, a matter of perspective—a matter of understanding that the American narrative of this century is not the only one or even the right one. Global, domestic; civilian, military; rich, poor: The last fifteen years have given rise to one split narrative after another, with history itself divided by how it's experienced and consumed. It is one century through newspaper headlines and television news reports; it is quite another through the Internet and social media. The first is forbiddingly bleak—life during wartime. The second is a party where history plays in the background, a song on Pandora or Spotify that people think they recognize when they walk through the door and then forget about when they find someone to talk to. The second is Alexis Ohanian's century, and Sam Altman's, and Tavi Gevinson's, and Kim Kardashian's, and Brandon Stanton's, and Palmer Luckey's, and when asked when it began, they do not name a historical event.

or Sam Altman, the twenty-first century began when his parents bought him a computer and he went on the Internet for the first time. "I first started going online to ask programming questions. Then, as a young teenager, sort of struggling with being gay, having the Internet became this unbelievable thing. You have something you can't talk about, and then you have people you can talk about it with. To connect with this huge world out there made me a more optimistic person."

For Kim Kardashian, thirty-four, it began "probably the first time I went on Twitter. I remember getting a call from Ryan Seacrest, He said, 'You've got to get on Twitter. You don't understand-social media is such a big deal. And I was like, 'Whatever.' I looked into it and I fell in love with it. I remember my first

> Twitter picture. I was in Mexico, and I had gotten this terrible sunburn with these sunglasses on, and when I took them off, it looked like I had a mask on. So I tweeted a picture of that, and it just got so much attention. We were in Mexico, and when we turned on one of the news channels, it was on. It was fascinating that we were in Mexico and people across the world knew I had a sunburn."

For Brandon Stanton, thirty, it began when he created "one of the first South Park fan pages on Yahoo. It had just come out and I was fourteen years old. Fourteen-year-olds generally have a very hard time connecting to the world and exercising power, but the day after it went online, a thousand people came to the page. I thought the counter was broken. It was my first major exposure to that kind of power. I remember being fourteen and going to my friend's house and thinking we were one idea away from being famous and really successful, because of the power the Internet gave us-every voice is equal, every voice has an equal chance."

Six years later, Stanton dropped out of college. Six years after that, he got fired from a job in finance. He began walking around the streets of New York, taking pictures of the people he met—the humans he met-and asking them for their stories. After a year of "collecting portraits without a demonstrable audience," he started

> a Facebook page called "Humans of New York," and suddenly he was getting one or two new followers a day, then ten-suddenly, he says, "the path was clear. There was a direct correlation between work and growth. And yeah, I've worked hard-but it's something that wasn't possible ten years ago. Do you think that anyone would have let me do this work? I just went out and did it."

> These are not just personal testimonies. These are articles of faith, and it's the element of faith that makes the testimonies almost unanimous. There are two ideas-or two facts-that

"As technology

progresses you're freed

and shorter time frames."

from history in shorter

—Brandon Stanton



Kim Kardashian, 34

An avatar of the digital age. Did she knowingly harness the power of narcissism and celebrity obsession through social media and reality TV? Was it the master plan of her mother, Kris Jenner? Whatever it was, this year Kim married Kanye and six million people watched a Keeping Up with the Kardashians wedding special; she posted the most Instagrammed photo of all time; and she started her mobile app, Kim Kardashian: Hollywood, which is expected to make \$200 million. Go ahead—say she's famous for no reason.

They name a technological one.

2003



INVASION OF IRAQ ABU GHRAIB HUMAN DNA MAPPED





Edward Snowden, 31

Former NSA contractor.
Leaker of classified documents. Activist who dropped one of the biggest rocks into the twenty-first-century pond. Now living in exile in Russia.



Seth Rogen, 32

Actor, writer, director, frequent pot smoker. Quite possibly the definer, and certainly the embodiment, of the charming millennial slacker. One of the best and funniest (and hardest-working) filmmakers in America. And he's great on Twitter.

WHEN SNOWDEN MET ROGEN...

While Tom Junod was talking to Edward Snowden by phone, Seth Rogen called for his interview. Juggling them on separate lines, Junod asked if they would be interested in talking to each other. Of course, they said. Are you kidding?

ES: Hey, Seth, can you hear me? This is Ed Snowden.

SR: Yeah, can you hear me? **ES:** Yeah, yeah. I can hear you.

How are you doing? **SR:** I'm good, man. People have told me that we sound

alike before. I kinda hear it. **ES** [laughs]: Yeah, I've seen

that on the Internet, too. **ESQ:** Holy shit! You have the same laugh. Snowden has

the Rogen laugh! **ES:** Aw, man. Now this is gonna be all over Twitter. [*Laughs*.] Yeah, I just wanted to say hi.

SR: Yeah, no, I'm a big fan of what you've done. I was literally just asking, "What's his day-to-day like? What's he doing right now?"

ES: Well, a lot of people have been asking me, you know, what my day-to-day is like, and they think it's, I don't know, like this big spy game or really interesting. It's actually really, really nerdy. Like, I spend a lot of time talking to cryptographers and computer scientists and engineers, because I'm trying to work with people to create solutions to the problems. A lot of people would figure this would be a really tough, really terrible situation, but what we're finding more and more. I think, is that

exile, right, as an idea doesn't really work anymore! Because of the Internet, because of technology.

SR: Wow. Well, that's good! I'm glad you sound like you're doing good, man! The reason I was talking about you is my friend [Joseph Gordon-Levitt] is playing you. I hope that doesn't make you mad! I can

"I gotta tell you, you know, the FBI is probably monitoring this call, so you might want to hide that under the desk." —Edward Snowden

give him some pointers if you want. [Laughs.]

ES: Nah, I don't mind. Everybody's got different opinions on it. It's a big issue; there's a lot going on. I just love that people talk about the issues, you know? I don't like when people focus on me, or this guy or that guy, or even politicians, because it's not a U.S.-only problem. It's not an Edward Snowden problem. It's not an NSA problem. These are global issues that affect everybody, and we've really gotta

figure out what kind of world we want to live in

ESQ: So, what are you doin', Rogen?

SR[laughs]: I'm smoking weed at my desk, bro.

ES: I gotta tell you, you know, the FBI is probably monitoring this call, so you might want to hide that under the desk. You've got like five minutes be-

fore they show up.

SR: Well, nice talking to you. Nice meeting you, man. I mean truly not how I expected this phone call to end, but again, I'm a big fan of what you've done. I'm a giant supporter of everything you've brought to light. It's a fuckin' amazing thing you did.

ES: Well, hey, thank you so much. All the support that everybody's given to me that I've been lucky to have, I'm just going to try to keep working to try to deserve it.

ESQ: But will you watch Seth's movies?

ES [laughs]: I'm not gonna get on all that with the FBI on the call, because God knows where they're gonna take this. SR: Look out for our next mov-

SR: Look out for our next moie. It's about North Korea. I think you'll think it's funny.

ES: That'll be awesome. I'm looking forward to it.

our cast of Registrants voiced again and again, in practically the same language. The first is that the story of the twenty-first century has been what Stanton calls the "leveraging" of the individual through the connection of individuals with other individuals, en masse. The second is that none of them would have been able to *exist* outside the oxygen chamber of the Internet...no, that none of them would have been able to do what they are doing or live as they are living at any other time in human history.

That these ideas have hardened into economic doctrine makes them no less seductive. At Y Combinator, Sam Altman and Alexis Ohanian make a living not just by funding young entrepreneurs but by inculcating in them the belief system that Ohanian began espousing back in high school. They are "creating careers that

didn't really exist." They are encouraging a generation "to think of themselves not just as consumers but also creators," to act upon the understanding that "once upon a time you had to open a factory—now all you have to do is open a laptop."

It sounds like a fanciful notion, but none of the people in this story would be in this story if they hadn't been able to act upon it. Tavi Gevinson wasn't just twelve when she started writing about fashion online; she was living in *Illinois*. "Because I had the Internet, I had access to a lot of information and resources and eventually became part of a community, and it eventually gave me access to a world that I wouldn't have had any access to unless I had parents with certain jobs or grew up in New York or something."

2004



FACEBOOK ASIAN TSUNAMI





LONDON BOMBING
YOUTUBE
HURRICANE KATRINA

2005



Neil Blumenthal and Dave Gilboa did, in fact, open a factory; they met in business school, and when Dave lost his eyeglasses, they realized how much eyeglasses *cost*. They were already steeped in the uncertainty born of 9/11; they had already assumed that there was no longer such a thing as a stable job, because there was no such thing as stability. So they came up with the idea of selling eyeglasses of their own design and manufacture online for ninety-five dollars, with the added fillip of giving one pair away for every pair sold. With two other students at Wharton, they created Warby Parker, be-

cause, as Blumenthal says, "our generation needs to be very comfortable with change in the status quo" and because "we had the ability to do something that brought joy and

happiness."

Of course, none of this is new, not even the sense of novelty-not even the claim that no other time in history could have produced a Tavi Gevinson or a Warby Parker. "You could have probably said that in 1902," **Seth Rogen,** thirty-two, says, but then he's a comedian: the only pessimist in the bunch. In truth, the generation that insists it represents the future had better represent the future, because the last generation that insisted it represented the future is, at the end of its influence, representing it so poorly. It has always seemed a function of privilege that millenni-

als have been able to declare themselves economic revolutionaries. It is turning out to be a matter of necessity that they turn out to be moral ones.

t has never been easy to take them seriously, especially against the enormity of the failures they inherited. How can they solve problems when they are so beholden to their little machines? How can they ever grow up when they are so loath to be alone? "That people desire to connect so much with people they don't even fucking know is a symptom of the lack of fulfillment in their day-to-day lives," Rogen says. "It's society slowly realizing that the things we were taught will make us happy won't, and they're desperately trying to invent new things to make them feel better. Some of the inventions are pretty fucking cool. But a lot of the connectivity people are searching for is a symptom of the fact that society as a whole has misled them as to what will make them feel satisfied with their lives."

But it's also all they've got. They put their hope in vast networks of technologically amassed intimacies because they

"I remember being fourteen and going to my friend's house and thinking we were one idea away from being famous and really successful, because of the power the Internet gave us." —Brandon Stanton

are long past putting their hope in traditional American institutions. "I think that the last fifteen years are a story of severe institutional failure that should profoundly concern people," says Ezra Klein. "I don't think you can look at this period and feel confident in our institutions or their ability to make wise decisions or handle emergencies effectively. Even when they succeed, they succeed in ways that don't always inspire confidence.

"For my sins, I go to a bunch of these conferences where you have people from Washington talking about politics and also now a lot of tech people talking about politics. And the thing I always notice when those folks are on panels together is the tech people speak from a perspective of watching seemingly impossible problems get solved routinely, whereas the political people speak from a perspective of watching completely solvable problems prove impossible to solve routinely."

It is not simply that Wall Street, the Congress, the CIA, the NSA, the VA, FEMA, and two successive presidencies have either failed or disappointed while Apple, Google, Facebook, and Twitter have succeeded. It's that technology companies have provided an apparent alternative to the paralysis of American institutions because they are-or seem to be-participatory in nature. They don't only inspire confidence; they require and reward faith. To use them is to aspire to them, or to try to compete with them, and the members of an entire generation have been using them all their lives. Participating in technology is how they participate in democracy-or at least how they participate in a democracy that worksand that faith forms the basis of a generational divide.

"It's easy to do something unconventional when all of the con-

The U.S. Military, 20.7*

By Michael Pitre, a Marine who served from 2002 to 2010 and deployed twice to Irag's Anbar Province, His first novel. Fives and Twenty-Fives, was published this year.

To some, the Long War has showcased the all-volunteer military as damn-near unbreakable. Though wielded by elected officials like a crossbow by an unsupervised eight-year-old, the U.S. armed forces somehow managed a ground campaign on

2006

Dave Gilboa, 34

Neil Blumenthal, 34

Cofounders of Warby

Parker, the fast-grow-

ing (mostly) online pur-

veyor of stylish glasses that cost about a third

of what the competi-

tion charges. Repre-

sents the characteris-

tic millennial thirst for

quilt-free capitalism by

donating one pair for

every pair sold.

2007



VIRGINIA TECH SHOOTING **GOOGLE STREET VIEW**



ventional things don't seem to make any sense," Alexis Ohanian says. "We don't have the time or the interest to wallow in another generation's bad decisions."

Does it matter if what they do seems small and busy—if the genius of a generation seems to express itself in touchscreen apps and innovative ways to share photographs? No, says Ohanian, because "there are so many undeniably world-changing things that started out looking like toys." When Matt Rogers worked for Apple, he worked on the iPhone, and remembers what critics said about it-that it was an expensive toy rather than a necessity. Now, at Nest, he's working on thermostats and home-security systems. It sounds...underwhelming. It sounds like the stuff of lifestyle magazines, until Rogers gets around to charting his ambitions: "Think of how much seventies- and eightiesera technology there is around your house. That has to be fixed. That has to be changed. The thermostat controls half the energy that people's houses consume. We're solving the most important problems in their homes, which is their most sacred place. Energy, security, safety-those are not trivial things."

But are they big things? Are they big *enough* things? The Registrants have not so much survived the shocks of the twenty-first century with their optimism intact; they have survived them with their *techno*-optimism intact, and techno-optimism always needs to justify itself. "If you want to tell me that you're optimistic

"Society is slowly realizing that the things we were taught will make us happy won't, and a lot of the connectivity people are searching for is a symptom of the fact that society as a whole has misled them as to what will make them feel satisfied with their lives."

—Seth Rogen

about technology, what I want to know is why aren't we creating more blockbuster drugs," Ezra Klein says. "If you want to tell me you're optimistic about technology, what I want to know is why is it still not clear how we're going to feed eleven billion people. Silicon Valley has somehow managed to brand itself as technology, but technology includes a lot of things. I think that what Silicon Valley is genuinely optimistic about is the Internet. And the problems the Internet can solve are many, but they are also limited. I think being optimistic about the world requires you to be

optimistic about advances in agricultural production, advances in medicine, advances in energy. And being optimistic about how awesome the Internet is going to become is very consistent with the pessimism about the world cooking itself through the unregulated fossil-fuel emissions."

This is not the first generation of techno-optimists. When **Leslie Dewan** was working on her Ph.D. in nuclear engineering at M.I.T., she and one of her classmates, Mark Massie, wanted to follow their entrepreneurial instincts, but not in

"tech"—rather, in nuclear technology. They wanted not just to start a company but to build a new kind of nuclear reactor, and for ideas and inspiration they began reading stacks of old scientific papers, many dating back to the fifties and early sixties.



Leslie Dewan, 29

Having perceived the upside of radioactive waste, she cofounded Transatomic Power Corporation, which has designed a nuclear reactor (and hopes to build one soon) that won't melt down and could use the hundreds of thousands of metric tons of waste that already exist to power the entire world for seventy-two years.

"We were reading a lot of these, and we were like, 'Wow, yeah, there was a time, in the very first few decades of the nuclear-power industry, when people were just thinking, We're going to solve this problem. We're going to take a technology that at the time had only been used for weapons and we're going to use it to power the world.' And you just feel like these engineers were just so **ICONTINUED ON PAGE 1381**

two fronts simultaneously for ten years. More astonishingly, America's fighting class and its families have not demanded an ounce of shared sacrifice from the larger civilian world.

Emerging from Iraq and Afghanistan is a military hard-

ened by a decade of combat and humbled by the limitations of deadly force. That tragically earned appreciation for what killing can and cannot accomplish informs the politics of a new veteran culture. In the wake of Ferguson, the most articulate outrage over police militarization came from veterans, and the demise of Don't Ask, Don't Tell proved a profound nonevent despite the fever dreams of social conservatives. Military voters carry water for no party and demand real answers as to

who we fight and why.

In this way, the U.S. military has assumed a new but no less important role: our last bastion of informed skepticism.

*Average enlistment age for the Army in 2013.

2008

2009



LEHMAN BROS. COLLAPSE/ GREAT RECESSION OBAMA ELECTED





\$787 BILLION STIMULUS TEA PARTY



Mark
Zuckerberg, 30

More than a seventh of the earth's population is on Facebook, driving profits from \$53 million in 2012 to \$1.5 billion last year—and Zuckerberg's personal wealth to more than \$30 billion.



Robby Mook, 34

Two sitting governors (Maryland's Martin O'Malley and Virginia's Terry McAuliffe) and two sitting senators have this Democratic campaigner to thank—the only guy who, as one Obama advisor put it, "whipped our ass three times" running Hillary's successful Nevada, Ohio, and Indiana primary campaigns in 2008. A favorite to run Hillary 2016—if she runs.



LeBron James, 29

He tapped into every Clevelander's fear that everyone, in the end, will leave Cleveland. And then he made everyone feel better by coming back humbled, to make things right.



Carl Lentz, 35

Many religions oppose the things that millennials value like equal rights, contraception, and iPhone use during ceremonial gatherings. But Lentz, the tatted-up Bieberbaptizing pastor of Hillsong NYC, a megachurch that attracts around six thousand young New Yorkers every week, has become the hipster Joel Osteen by embracing the culture war instead of fighting it: "What in God's name is so insecure that you can't handle someone else's view of your establishment?" he says.



Drew Houston, 31, and Arash Ferdowsi, 29

By creating Dropbox—a free idiotproof Web-based file-sharing service used by more than three hundred million people—they granted even the most hopeless technophobes access to the Cloud. By developing paid Dropbox applications for four million businesses, they landed in a position to make billions on the inevitable IPO.



Lawrence, 24

She broke through with Winter's Bone, really broke through with The Hunger Games, and won an Oscar for her performance in Silver Linings Playbook. She also reminded us that even in an age of toxic celebrity coverage, it's still possible for a major star to be a human being without getting hounded out of town.



Sean Parker, 34

Sure, he's known for being a bit of a douche. But if you were largely responsible for toppling the music industry (Napster), forever changing how we interact with the Internet and fellow humans (Facebook), and legitimizing Justin Timberlake's acting career (The Social Network), you might be a little bit of a douche yourself. His influence has yet to show any signs of slowing—when he served as managing partner of the Founders Fund, he also got involved with companies like SpaceX, Oculus VR, Airbnb, and Lyft.



<u>Daniel</u> Schwartz, 34

Since naming Schwartz CEO last year, the struggling sixty-year-old Burger King has adopted a start-up mentality: aggressively cutting costs, selling off restaurants to franchisees, and startling Wall Street by launching a merger with Canadian giant Tim Hortons. It's no longer surprising to see someone under forty running a company, but Schwartz is the first millennial to run such an oldschool brand.

A Brief Exchange with

REDDIT'S ALEXIS OHANIAN ON THE TOPIC OF LESLIE DEWAN

ESQ: I don't mean to put any pressure on you, but the woman I just spoke to is basically inventing a new model for the nuclear reactor, and she's twenty-nine.

AO: Oh! Jeez. Fuck me, right?

ESQ: Yeah, exactly.

AO: You know, I had a couple nuclear side projects for a while, but they were so easy I just decided that I'd spend my time helping people share cat photos on the Internet.

A Brief Exchange with

KIM KARDASHIAN ONTHETOPIC OF PRIVACY

ESQ: Do privacy issues affect you

or worry you?

KK: A little bit—but, you know, it's kind of hard to say that, coming from someone that lives their life on a reality show.



Beyoncé, 33

She's the highest-paid black musician of all time, selling 75 million albums and winning seventeen Grammys. But she's also become a feminist icon by convincing everyone not that the sexes are equal but that everyone is equally inferior to Beyoncé.



Jordi Muñoz, 28

Came to the United States from Mexico with a pregnant girlfriend and while waiting for his green card hacked a Wii remote into a drone and a toaster into a microchipto-circuit-board oven in his garage, thereby precipitating his cofounding of what is now the biggest commercialdrone manufacturer in North America, 3D Robotics, at the age of twenty-three.



<u>Lena</u> Dunham, 28

She made her first film, Tiny Furniture, in 2010; got her own show, the beloved/maligned Girls, in 2012; and received a \$3.7 million advance for her memoir. She has no pedestal, no filter, no restraint, often no pants, and has done more than most to normalize the absurdity of the human organism.

"I really do think human desire is infinite and people are creative and people want new things."

—Sam Altman

"I am optimistic because of the pessimism of the last fifteen years." —Edward Snowden



Tulsi Gabbard, 33

The American Congress, like America, is becoming more diverse, but Gabbard-a Samoan-born Hawaiian and Hindu surfer—has surely set some kind of record. The youngest state legislator ever elected to office in Hawaii, she left the Hawaii House of Representatives at age twenty-three to deploy with the National Guard and serve a year in Iraq. She was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2012 while remaining a captain in the National Guard.



Daniel Ek, 31

He became the new boy-king of the recorded-music industry as the cofounder of Spotify, the streaming-music service that houses more than twenty million songs and, since March 2013, has seen its user total (now forty million increase by fifteen million—ten times the number of physical albums sold in all of 2013.

EK'S QUINTESSENTIAL 21ST-CENTURY PLAYLIST (NATURALLY ALL PARTY MUSIC)

"Beggin for Thread," Banks • "Devil's Touch," TIAAN • "I Got U," Duke Dumont • "Do It Again," Röyksopp & Robyn

- "Sanctified," Rick Ross
- "Made in America," Jay Z
- "New Dorp. New York," SBTRKT • "Hold On, We're Going Home," Drake • "High You Are," What So Not • "You Make

Me Feel Good," Satin Jackets

Channing Tatum, 34

Actor. Leading man. Like Steve McQueen, only nice. See page 121.



Megan Ellison, 28

Instead of adding to the ranks of Hollywood socialites, Megan Ellison took the money of her father, Oracle cofounder Larry Ellison, and created Annapurna Pictures, a production company that has turned out nine celebrated films in just three years.

No passive financier, Ellison personally travels to the set to keep an eye on things, tweeting updates mixed with favored quotes, like "I have never made but one prayer to God, a very short one: 'O Lord, make my enemies ridiculous.' And God granted it" (Voltaire).

HERE'S HER HISTORIC RUN, BY THE NUMBERS: Annapurna Pictures Created: 2011

Total films: 9 (Lawless, The Master, Killing Them Softly, Zero Dark Thirty, Spring Breakers, The Grandmaster, Her, American Hustle, Foxcatcher)

office: \$647,456,014* Average worldwide box office: \$80,932,700*

Average production budget: \$27,450,000*

Average box-office return: 294%*

Academy Award nominations: 25 Academy Award wins: 2 Average Metacritic

metascore: 77 (compared with a Weinstein Company score of 59) *Excluding Foxcatcher, which was not in theaters

at press time.



Palmer Luckey, 22

When Palmer Luckey was fifteen, he crowdsourced his education by starting Mod-Retro, an online forum for gamers and hackers to come together to help one another modify gaming consoles. When he was eighteen, he built a head-mounted gaming display because he couldn't find one that didn't suck. When he was twenty, he crowdsourced \$2.4 million (surpassing his Kickstarter goal of \$250,000) to fund the Oculus Rift. When he was twenty-one, he sold Oculus Rift to Facebook for \$2 billion-a milestone he could at least legally drink to.

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 135]

driven and so hopeful."

That particular brand of technooptimism did not survive. The drive and hope of that generation of nuclear engineers did not survive the calculations and miscalculations of the nuclear industry, nor an organized opposition that effectively cast utopian ambitions as cynical designs, nor a regulatory apparatus traumatized by a series of nuclear accidents. For thirty years, the United States not only stopped building and licensing nuclear plants; it stopped producing nuclear engineers. "If you look at the age distribution of nuclear engineers," Dewan says, "you have a ton of people who are in their seventies and in their eighties-like, from the very start of the industry. And then really no one in their forties and fifties-very, very few nuclear engineers that age. And then you start seeing a lot again who are around my age, who are in their late twenties and early thirties. Just looking at graduation rates of new nuclear Ph.D.'s and undergrads, the numbers have been going up and up for the past five years after decades of stagnation. So there's almost like a population pressure of people who are now

free to work and develop all of these new ideas."

The new idea that Dewan and her partners had was actually based on an old design they found in one of those papers, and the name of the company they started, Transatomic, was based on the moment before the wonder of "atomic energy" was overcome by the eternal specter of "nuclear waste." As it happens, the Transatomic nuclear reactor is designed to use nuclear waste as fuel—to consume nuclear waste and turn it into electricity. It is an inherently optimistic project, even a utopian one. But the story behind it is actually two stories. The first is that techno-optimism can fail. The Esquire Registrants represent a generation that has responded to the failure of institutions by putting their belief in technology. But technology can become an institution, and even institutions designed not to be institutions-even Silicon Valley-can fail to deliver on their promises. It is a good thing that the second sto-

ry is a story of survival, and of survivors. Leslie Dewan and her generational counterparts might be the most privileged survivors in the history of human endeavor, but they are survivors nevertheless, and like all survivors they are not simply plunging giddily into the future, faces aglow with the light from their little screens.

They are also reclaiming the past.

he narrative of the last fifteen years is that technology has allowed for the leveraging of the individual.

The counternarrative is that it has allowed for the leveraging of the powers of the state.

The narrative of the last fifteen years is that technology has permitted an unprecedented expansion of personal freedom.

The counternarrative is that it has permitted an unprecedented invasion of personal privacy.

The narrative of the last fifteen years is that technology has created unparalleled opportunities.

The counternarrative is that it has accelerated unparalleled inequalities.

The narrative of the Esquire Register is that those chosen for it represent an unexpected generational hardiness, an optimism that has survived the calamities of the new century.

> The counternarrative is that their optimism is the inevitable consequence of their success, and that this essay would be rather different if it featured those who experienced the new century in need or at war.

> There are no answers for the questions raised by the century of the counternarrative, because they are fundamental to it. The inequality that exists in near equipoise to our techno-optimism is "the fundamental question of our time," says **Sam** Altman. "But this idea of technology-



As a sophomore at Harvard, he came up with the theory that higher interest rates can lead to more investment. Later, he set up an experiment showing that supermarket shoppers buy less if they're shown the sales tax on an item before they buy. His work, which applies big data and experimentation to messy socialpolicy issues from taxes to social mobility, won him tenure at Harvard at the age of twenty-nine and a MacArthur "ge-

nius" grant in 2012.



Sam Altman, 29

Reddit, Airbnb, Dropbox, Scribd: These are just a few of the seven hundred start-ups that Y Combinator has funded and mentored since 2005. Whereas a lot of venture capitalists just dump money on Silicon Valley wunderkinds, YC counsels, helps them develop business plans, and makes key introductions. Altman was a member of the first start-up class, and last February YC cofounder Paul Graham made him the president, believing that of all the tech wizards he'd met over the last nine years, Altman was the one who stood out the most.

2010



DEEPWATER HORIZON WIKILEAKS ARAB SPRING





Micah White, 32

An activist and former Adbusters editor who saw the protests of Tahrir Square and launched the Occupy Wall Street movement—and the wealth-gap debate that's raged ever since—with a letter that began "All right you 90,000 redeemers, rebels, and radicals out there..." He's since opened Boutique Activist Consultancy. (Motto: "We Win Lost Causes.")

concentrated opportunity is not new. It's been going on since humans stopped being hunter-gatherers and there's been any technology at all. Technology magnifies differences, and it's been replacing or obviating jobs for a long time. But what happens as that case accelerates? I'm not one of these doomsayers who says 'There will be no jobs.' Because I really do think human desire is infinite and people are creative and people want new things. But I don't know what the future is going to look like and what is going to replace all the stuff that's going away."

One answer, of course, is that technology provides the answers to the questions that technology itself raises. Even **Raj Chetty,** who has made a study at Harvard of the inequality of opportunity

in America—and who says that most Americans "realize that if you're born in the wrong ZIP code to a low-income family, you don't actually have a very good chance of succeeding"—maintains an optimism based on technology's capacity to solve intractable problems. The twenty-first century has seen the rise not just of technology but of data, and the combination of those two things—those two *forces*—has "transformed our ability to tackle questions like inequality and other social problems in a way that would have been infeasible fifteen years ago."

We can trust technology to effect change—that's a given. But can we trust it to effect social change... change that comes at a cost? Registrants tend not to talk about the social catastrophes of the twenty-first century. Well, they talk about school shootings. But they

don't talk about Katrina, they don't talk about Deepwater Horizon, they don't talk about Ferguson. What they do talk about is Occupy. What they do talk about is the Arab Spring. What they talk about is Hong Kong. What they talk about is the war—and how their access to the Internet galvanized their opposition to it. What they talk about, in short, are social movements that validate their faith in technology to inspire social movements. **Palmer Luckey**, the virtual-reality pioneer, goes so far as to wonder if America's constitutionally challenged response to 9/11 "would have panned out differently if the Internet was as fleshed out as it is today." Brandon Stanton goes so far as to say that "war is so much more difficult now. So much of mobilizing people for war is controlling the perception of the enemy, portraying them as the other. That is more difficult today because those people are able to express themselves."

But there is a counternarrative to Occupy, to the Arab Spring, and to Hong Kong.

The counternarrative is the world.

Yes, the Occupy movement demonstrated exactly what one of its organizers, **Micah White**, says it did—that we live in a time when "an idea can come out of nowhere and sweep the entire world in six weeks." But it ran out of energy and it ran aground, and by the time it was over, White believed that protest "is ineffective for changing the political reality we live in." Why? Because "it doesn't matter"—because the people whose minds it's

supposed to change don't care. "You can't solve climate change by organizing a global climate march, which is what just happened a few months ago."

And then came the Arab Spring, with its narrative impossibly hopeful and its counternarrative impossibly brutal.

And then came Edward Snowden. Snowden is an optimist. He is also a pessimist. "I am optimistic," he says, "because of the pessimism of the last fifteen years. Basically we have been squeezed, and we are being squeezed in extraordinary ways. We are a generation that is rising from an atmosphere of inequality, and the pressure on them is squeezing them up to the top." He has shown, like no one else, the power of the individual. He has

"Being optimistic about how awesome the Internet is going to become is very consistent with the pessimism about the world cooking itself through the unregulated fossil-fuel emissions."

—Ezra Klein

shown, like no one else, the power of the state. He says that he has proven that "exile doesn't work anymore." He says this from an exile—or, depending on your point of view, a flight—that has now lasted a year and a half. The twenty-first century began for him "with that concept of digital telepathy that we invented with the social Web, with Web 2.0." He is, no less than Kim Kardashian or Tavi Gevinson, a "child of the Internet. I take my culture from the Internet. I take my education from the Internet. I am a product of it. I am one of many million avatars." The century began a second time when he read a classified report on warrantless wiretapping: "That was a sea change for me, when I realized that some kind of action was necessary on the part of any citizen who viewed this document, and that anybody who was aware of what happened during that period had an obligation to his country to make it known." When he speaks of "citizens more and

2011



OSAMA BIN LADEN KILLED FUKUSHIMA NUCLEAR DISASTER OCCUPY WALL STREET







THE MILLENNIUM AT 15

more able to match government capabilities and outpace the progress of state power," he breaks out into unabashed geek poetry: "They have greater resources. They are not agile. And we-we're able to create new ways to love and dream, and move on again like settlers, like nomads. We're the digital tribes." He al-

so says, "It's not inevitable that we will win."

He is the representative figure of his generation because he is the narrative and the counternarrative all wrapped into one.

et the word go forth from

this time and place, to friend

and foe alike, that the torch

The bond trader turned photographer behind the wildly popular Humans of New York, a blog containing more than seven thousand street photos of New Yorkers with funny, random, and/or poignant quotes from the subiects, effectively slowed down the ever-accelerating Web, forcing readers to pause, just for a moment, to contemplate our shared humanity. Last year, he turned it into a hugely best-selling book. This year, the UN sent him on a "world tour" to accomplish the same thing with the rest of the planet.

has been passed to a new generation of citizens-raised in the Brandon Stanton, 30 digital age, skeptical of the status quo, and hungry to make the world suck less—and unwilling to tolerate or perpetuate the bullshit that has clogged our politics, derailed our economy, fractured our society, and thus stalled our great nation. To change the world in the Industrial Age, we needed to open a factoryin the Internet Age we need only open a laptop. We're pioneers in a new world, and we're not just exploring it; we're creating it." Alexis Ohanian wrote

that. Rather, he rewrote it—by request, the speaker at Howard High School's 2001 graduation ceremony rewrote President John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Ad-

dress. Ohanian, however, doesn't deviate from the message he imparted to his high school classmates. Fourteen years ago, he told them-he told the members of his generation-that they were going to win. Now he's telling them they're winning.

And he's right. They're winning. They're winning just as they keep saying they're winning—they're changing the world. They're just not winning for the reason they say they're winning. They think they're winning because technology is on their side, or because they're on technology's side. They think they're winning because they've been using technology since they were born, and technology is ascendant. They've been trained to



Mike Krieger, 28, and Kevin Systrom, 30

They founded Instagram—the photo app with revolutionary filters that can make an unexceptional Tuesday look like a cherished memory for its two hundred million monthly users. Then they sold it to Facebook for \$1 billion even though it made no money, inspiring a wholesale revision of business plans across the Silicon Valley ecosystem.

think they're winning because technology always wins. But that's not why, because their victory is not technological. It's...

Well, what kind of victory is it? Laverne Cox thinks that it's over difference. And she thinks that it began after 9/11: "Because after 9/11, everybody in America began to feel what black folks have been feeling for a long time. You're always under surveillance. You're always jeopardized by your government. You're what Cornel West calls niggerized."

Seth Rogen thinks that it's over what was left of propriety. "When I was first starting, people in movies didn't swear casually. We were major proponents of that and now it seems very normal. When we did it in 40-Year-Old Virgin, it was earth-shattering. When we were trying to sell the script to Superbad, it was like, 'Why do they swear so much?' I was like, 'People swear.

> That's the joke.' And casual drug use is much more accepted than when I first started. 40-Year-Old Virgin was one of the first movies I'd ever seen where they're smoking weed and that wasn't the point of the scene. They're just smoking weed."

> Brian Chesky, thirty-three, a cofounder of "sharing economy" exemplar Airbnb, thinks it's over human nature. "Technology has changed people," he says. "It has taught us we can actually trust people. I think it has reminded us that people are fundamentally good."

And Brandon Stanton thinks it's over history itself. "Even the invention of America freed people from history. It wasn't about what your father did or about your bloodline-it was about merit. Everything is moving toward that, freeing us from history, giving us agency over our lives." He followed up with a series of text messages:

"As technology progresses you're freed from history in shorter and shorter time frames."

"Things move so much faster now, you can immediately switch directions and be



An art-school student who cofounded Airbnb six years ago and in so doing became one of the high priests of the so-called sharing economy, spreading throughout the land his gospel of "Fuck hotels." Which he seems to be doing. Airbnb has far more rooms for rent-more than eight hundred thousand in 190 countriesthan any hotel chain has had in history.

2012 2013

HURRICANESANDY **NEWTOWN SCHOOL SHOOTING**



SAME-SEX MARRIAGE OBAMACARE SNOWDEN/NSA

BOSTON MARATHON BOMBING

freed of your history from the past four years."

- "8 years ago I flunked out of college."
- "4 years ago I got fired from finance."
- "Last year I was a number one NYT best selling author."
- "Only recently could I have freed myself so quickly from that history." $\,$
- "100 years ago you could have freed yourself from the history of your father."

"Now you can free yourself from your history 2 years ago." History? **Kevin Systrom,** CEO of Instagram, knew that he was living in the twenty-first century the first time he used an iPhone. Matt Rogers knew on the day of the Facebook IPO. Micah White knew when he learned about the invention of bitcoin. Palmer Luckey knew when computer users from all over the world attacked Australia's servers to retaliate against the Australian government's plans to prohibit pornography featuring small-breasted women—"Titstorm."

Forget history. "See, that's the thing," says **Tyler, the**Creator, leader of the hip-hop collective Odd Future.
"When you ask [what headlines from the last fifteen years were especially important], people are automatically gonna think of war and like, fuckin' marriage and religion and all that shit. You know what headline made me fuckin' shed a tear last year? The release date for Grand Theft Auto V. When they released the release date for Grand Theft Auto V for Xbox 360, that's the fuckin' headline that said, 'Oh my God. I'm excited. Oh my God, I love my life. Our fuckin' generation and the world and the universe is on my side, because they're about to release the greatest game of all time.'

"Look, man. That's the thing, man. People don't give a fuck. If it's not really fully affecting their life, man, people don't care. And that could be taken yay or nay, positive or negative, good or bad. But I mean that's just how it is, dude. If someone got shot like down the street or whatever. 'Someone got shot, dude? Aw, man, that sucks. All right, I'm gonna go get food now. And I'm gonna forget about it.' You know? That's just how life works. Oh, that sucks to hear news, maybe, that happened, but if it doesn't fully affect me, you know, that's not what I'm gonna care about. I care about

"It's gonna be sick in the future, where people aren't gonna care. Where they're not gonna care about your religion. They don't care if you're gay or straight. None of that shit's gonna really matter, you know? Hopefully I'm alive or in my fuckin' last days on this earth to at least see that, but I just feel like that's where shit is going, man. No one gives a fuck, dude. And that's gonna be sick, man. I think when nobody really gives a fuck and everybody's just on their own shit and everyone's happy, I don't think it'll be no more war. None of that bullshit, man. But that's the thing. People be giving a fuck too much about shit that don't even fuckin' really matter. You know, that's just how I see it, though. Like with



Odd Future, 20s

A group of guerrilla pranksters/artists, with names like Tyler, the Creator; Earl Sweatshirt; and Frank Ocean, that became known first for its cultish, hip-hop, prodigy-oddball online mixtapes. And then, through record deals, riotous concerts, the Internet, self-made freakish music videos, late-night Cartoon Network sketches, and Technicolor clothes, gave voice to thousands of fellow outcasts.

Further thoughts from Tyler, the Creator, 23

> If this was a kindergarten class and we had to draw a fuckin' sky or a city or some shit, everyone's sky would be fucking blue: there would be a nice mom and dad and a nice paved road. Why? Because that's fucking safe. That's simple, and that's where everyone goes. Fuck. That.

Bullshit. Man. Paint the fuckin' sky green. There's no roads. Everyone's on boats. And it's fire on the ground. And there's no dad. How about that? There's no fuckin' dad.

In tad.

If the generations just keep on progressing the way that they are...everyone gonna be light-skinned and not gonna have a religion, and everybody gonna be gettin' married. I'll be able to marry

a bike. That'd be tight. It sounds crazy, but that makes sense. Like, I could marry whatever I want because I'm in love with it. > It's gonna be all right. You know? That's how I see shit. It's okay. > I mean I don't wanna marry—I'm not sexually attracted to bikes. But you get exactly where I'm going with this. > All right, man. I'm hanging up.

war...people are fighting each other over how Humpty Dumpty fell off the wall. Like, how they interpret how Humpty Dumpty fell off the wall. Like, 'Hey, man. If that's what you think, man, that's cool. I don't wanna hate you.' Like, there's gonna be a time when niggas don't give a fuck. 'Okay, yeah. I think he fell off like this. Oh, that's how you think he fell off? Cool. Well, I'm gonna continue on with my day. Later.' That's just how I see it, though. I don't know. I'm just being optimistic."

Yes, that's it. The inaugural speech of Tyler, the Creator: Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that over the last fifteen years, "Technology took over. People started getting real scared, and everyone turned into pussies. And everyone has low self-esteem and sucks. That's what happened."

And then, optimists all, they went out and changed the world. 18

2014



Grand Theft Auto V!



UKRAINE CRISIS
EBOLA
NEW WORLD TRADE
CENTER OPENS









PHOTOGRAPH BY SIMON EMMETT

MICHAEL CAINE

ACTOR, 81, LEATHERHEAD, ENGLAND INTERVIEWED BY CAL FUSSMAN, AUGUST 4, 2014

- > Nobody impersonated me when I was a child. Where I came from, everybody talked just like me.
- > I'm cockney, which is a certain type of working-class London. We are all funny—all of us. I've never met a cockney who wasn't funny. We do not have a miserable side. But we do have a ferocious side. Someone once asked, "Do cockneys commit suicide?" I said, "No. If they get pissed off, they murder people."
- > Yes, there is a best lesson my mother taught me! There is! It was during the Second World War. I was six and my brother was three. When my father left to join the fight, my mother was crying, and then she pulled herself together and turned to the two of us and instead of saying, "Oh, I've got to look after the two of you, and I'm on my own," she said, "Your father's gone. Now you two have got to look after me." And we went, "Right, Mum. Don't worry. We'll do that. We'll take care of you. It's okay." And she made men of us with one sentence.
- > Actors, what do we do? We study behavior. I never went to drama school. I learned my acting on the subway, watching how people moved and what they did.
- > If I stole anything, it was from Marlon Brando, but I don't remember what it was.
- > The greatest compliment I ever received came while I was working with Sir Laurence Olivier. Lord Olivier. We were making a film called Sleuth, and I did a scene with him. When it finished, he looked at me and said, "I thought I had an assistant. I see I have a partner."
- > In the restaurant, my wife always says, "You didn't look at the bill." I say, "I don't want to worry myself by looking at the bill and asking, Who had the onion rings? or They overcharged me for chips." Because those moments all add up to years. And how much money would you pay for another year?
- > Poverty taught me not to worry about money.
- > I had come to Hollywood to star in a picture called Gambit. I used to sit in the lobby of the Beverly Hills Hotel and look out for film stars. One day, John Wayne came in, saw me, and said: "Are you in that movie called Alfie?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "I just saw that. It's very good, son." And we became friends. He gave me some advice. He said, "Never wear suede shoes." I asked why and he said, "Because you'll be taking a piss in a men's room and there'll be a guy next to you, and all of a sudden the guy will recognize you and he'll turn and go, 'Michael Caine!' And he'll piss all over your shoes!" I never wore suede shoes again.
- > I see a frog and think it's not really worth killing their whole body for just those little legs.
- > In real estate they say: Location, location, location. But the next time you buy a house, remember the f word: finite. You must buy property that is finite. The last house on a very good block. The last house on the seaside—where there's no more to sell. They mustn't be able to build anything else. It's not good buying in Las Vegas, where there's seventy-eight thousand square miles of desert, you know?
- > Never wear anything to make people look at you.
- > One rule of parenting? Forgive everything.
- > You know who saved my life? Tony Curtis. I was at a party. This was when Tony Curtis was very famous. I knew who he was but had never met him. I was speaking to someone by a fireplace and took the end of the cigarette that was in my mouth, lit another cigarette with it, and went on talking and smoking. Then I felt a hand come around behind me and go into my pocket. Tony Curtis took the cigarettes out and threw them in the fire. He said, "You don't know me, but I've been watching you. That is, what, the fifth cigarette you've lit in less than an hour?" He said, "You're gonna die. I've just saved your life for you." He was right. You can't smoke cigarettes like that and live. And I stopped.
- > I have no sense of competition with other actors. I love to see great performances. The only sense of competition I have is with myself.... This time, you've got to do something absolutely different from what you've ever done before. On occasions, I've succeeded. That's how I've kept my career going.
- > Fatigue doesn't happen until you suddenly go, "I'm bored."
- > There's so much medicine. So many advances ... My friend Quincy Jones always says to me, "If you live another five years, they'll discover so many things you'll live another five."
- > Yes, your fears do diminish with age—'cause your memory goes and you forget what vou're afraid of!
- > You couldn't tell if I was lying. But I could tell if you were. 12

The compulsively imitable Michael Caine stars in Christopher Nolan's sci-fi thriller Interstellar, in theaters now, and in Kingsman: The Secret Service, due out this coming February.

AWAY

In March, astronaut Scott Kelly will undertake the longest space mission in American history. He and a cosmonaut will begin an uninterrupted year aboard the International Space Station—a year exposed to the strange and deep effects of weightlessness, acute stress, isolation, and cosmic radiation. It is the most ambitious manned space mission in years. And it will also be the first step in a human expedition to Mars

In cavernous Building 9 at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, tucked behind a privacy screen, there is a working model of the International Space Station's toilet. Scott Kelly flicked the three switches that power it up—its control panels, stamped in Cyrillic, flashed with a succession of green lights-and he nodded when a familiar hum filled the air. Three years ago, he commanded the space station for six months, and he came to know the Waste and Hygiene Compartment well. In late March, Kelly will return to his former home as the first American astronaut assigned to live in space for twelve months. This summer, between his morning robotics training and his afternoon Russian class, he took a refresher course in the orbital evacuation of his bowels. The toilet does not have a seat. It dawned on him that he will not sit down for a year.

He will spend that year falling so fast he will appear to float—in the instance of the toilet, over a small square of plastic with a circular hole just a few inches across. Only his feet will be anchored by restraints. It is better than it used to be. For the two shuttle missions earlier in his career, Kelly's training included a toilet with a closed-circuit camera in its bowl, pointing straight up. He had to learn to assume the position by checking a nearby monitor, as though he were using a bombsight.

Now, on the space station, considerable air suction assists in maintaining alignment. Stool is drawn into a clear plastic bag that lines the hole; the bags have distinctive red release tabs. After the astronaut cleans up with gauze and Huggies Natural Care wipes—NASA doesn't endorse any

particular brand of wipe; it just happens to fly Huggies—they're pushed into the same bag, which is removed, tied up, and shoved into a metal canister the size of a milk jug that, when full, will be jettisoned in a trash ship and turned into a shooting star. Finally, the bag is replaced as a courtesy to the toilet's next occupant. When the new bag isn't properly installed, it's called short bagging, and short bagging is the sort of thing that can strain crew relations.

Weightlessness changes everything, and it will change Scott Kelly. Because he won't be sitting, and because the human body is a ruthless and efficient machine, over time his pelvis will lose its bursa sacs, which cushion his hip joints against earthly hazards like toilet seats but become obsolete in space. He will also urinate some significant percentage of his blood reserve-stored in his legs on the ground, but risen into his overstuffed core in the absence of gravity—into a separate piece of the WHC. More specifically, he will take the hose that hangs to the left of the toilet, remove the plastic cap off the yellow, narrow-mouthed funnel at its end, open the urine valve, check to see that there's sufficient air suction in it, too, and aim for the middle. The urine will then pass through a series of centrifuges and purification systems and come out the other end as his water supply.

Before the urine enters the first separator—a \$700,000 Russian-built piece of hardware that

spins the air out of it—it will be given a dose of a syrupy, almost black liquid called pretreat. Its exact composition is secret, but it's some toxic

ьч SIRHO SЭNOL

combination of chromium trioxide and sulfuric acid. Human urine, left untreated, will release particulates that will give the waterpurification system the equivalent of the bends. This is a problem that had a team of engineers scratching their heads. Their literal solution was to fight the particulates with pretreat, now one of thousands of responses to the challenges of life in space, our ever-growing collection of improvisations and sidesteps that will allow us, one day, to get from here to there.

In such a complicated environment, however, solutions often give rise to more confounding problems. One day during Kelly's six-month mission, in 2010-11, the toilet's lights flashed red instead of green. He removed a panel and discovered a faulty hose connection had led to a pretreat leak. In microgravity, the solution didn't drip or conveniently pool. It formed a shimmering sphere of acids the size and color of a cannonball that now floated out of the cabinet.

Kelly hadn't been in space long enough to have suppressed all of his gravity-bound instincts. He grabbed an old T-shirt to soak up the pretreat, as though he'd spilled oil in his garage. Unfortunately, that old T-shirt had sweat and therefore water molecules trapped in its fibers. Pour a little acid into enough water and it will disperse. Introduce a small amount of water to a cauldron of acid and something else happens. That old T-shirt didn't act like a sponge. It was flint. Now Kelly saw and smelled smoke.

Fire is the primal fear of astronauts. Every American astronaut who has been killed in a space suit has died in flames. There was a terrible fire on Mir, the old Soviet space station, and it's whispered about in Houston like a ghost story. (It wasn't fatal; cosmonauts tend to die by asphyxiation or in falls to earth.) That's not only because the crew can't escape outside or because the fire will consume their oxygen. Fire, like just about everything else, behaves differently in weightlessness.

> A candle's flame always points up because of gravity. Fire is superheated gas that's lighter than the air around it. That's why volcanic plumes and hot-air balloons rise. We can fight fires because they have a predictable architecture, built with a spine like a book. In orbit, fire is not lighter than air. It weighs the same as air, which weighs the same as everything else. A candle's flame no longer points up be-

cause there is no up. A candle's flame is round. A fire will imitate the sun. Kelly's trip to the bathroom now threatened to turn into a ball of anchorless flame.

Happily, one of Kelly's crewmates was a chemist named Cady Coleman. She understood the nature of acids—she knew that too little water might ignite them, and yet enough water rendered them harmless. But how could she bring one to the other? There was no hauling a bucket from the sink. Coleman found a large plastic bag, soaked some towels, threw them in the bag, and then caught the smoldering ball of acids with it as though she were scooping up a fish in a net. In time, the bag-its combination of enough water and not enough oxvgen—snuffed out the threat. It was less warfare than a kind of siege.

Now, in Building 9, Scott Kelly looked down at the toilet that will again be his. The lights on the panels continued to flash, and the fans

> continued to whir. There was the hose with the yellow funnel. There were those clear plastic bags with the distinctive red tabs, and the metal canister into which they will be stuffed. There was the pouch of Huggies.

"A year is a long time," he said.

не Яussiaus proposed the one-year mission. Roscosmos, Russia's space agency, has always been more intrigued by the risks and rewards of long-duration flight than NASA has been. Four

cosmonauts spent more than a year in space on the uncomfortable bucket that was Mir, the last in 1999. A narrow-faced Russian named Sergei Krikalev is the current record holder for the most time lived in orbit. Over six missions, he has spent eight hundred and three days, nine hours, and thirty-nine minutes weightless. Semi-famously, he was on Mir when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. Mir didn't have many windows, but whenever Krikalev found his way to one, he looked down on a new world.

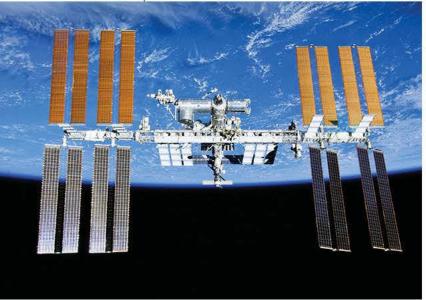
The International Space Station was built in that tumultuous reality. Fearful that aimless Russian rocket scientists might seek stable employment in places like North Korea or Iran, the Americans proposed a more harmonic convergence: the grandest and most difficult construction project in history, built out of Russian wisdom and American largesse. Today, the station comprises two distinct halves, augmented by Japanese, European, and Canadian contributions. The

> Russian segments are narrower and more austere. The Russians don't process their urine; they just piss into tanks. They also carpet their modules in Velcro, using nearly every available surface to secure a battalion of objects that otherwise would be satellites. The Americans don't have nearly as much Velcro in their quarters. They've deemed it a fire risk.

By treaty, there is agreement between the U.S. and Russia that their conjoined space programs are out of political bounds. Whatever events might be unfolding on earth, whatever airliners might be shot out of the Ukrainian sky, there are no sides in space. It helps that the Russians possess our only means to manned orbit the Soyuz spacecraft—and that the Americans control much of the station's electrical plant and the gyroscopes that maintain its attitude. "We have something up there that is holding us together," says Michael Suffredini, NASA's manager of the ISS Program Office. "Right now we have six crew onboard, and we all understand that these men and women are the next step for humanity."

But like countries and their arrangements, the station







has a life span: It will stop defying gravity in 2024, or not long after. While it always has been used as a weightless laboratory—more than a thousand investigations in materials and medical research have been undertaken since Expedition 1

in 2000—the Russians wondered whether the station's residents might be part of a larger experiment in the time they have left. Six-month expeditions have become the industry standard, but a journey to Mars—MAPC in Cyrillic—will require a crew to spend as long as three years in space. So the Russians proposed that, in the decade or so before the station falls to earth, as many as twelve subjects be rocketed up, delivered in pairs, to test the physical and psychological limits of humans in weightlessness. (Those four brawny men on Mir were never subjected to intensive diagnostic study; cosmonauts still refuse to give stool samples.) The Americans, fresh off the stunning success of the Mars rover Curiosity, agreed. We've proved we can reach Mars with our machines; the ex-

Such an undertaking requires equal parts optimism and resignation. It takes a certain measure of faith to strap into a seat on a missile in Kazakhstan and trust that you will end up safely in orbit. It also takes the belief that we will one day need to. For all the hopefulness astronauts represent, they are among the least delusional people on earth. What Chris Hadfield, a former astronaut and station commander, calls the "North American subculture of pretense"—that sense that we can make all our wishes come true—has

iled dozen will help us decide whether we can reach it with our feet.

been stripped from them over years of simulations that end in their deaths. Astronauts are experts in weakness.

"I'm in this business to take humans beyond low-earth orbit," Suffredini says. "I believe that's how this species will survive, when we can inhabit other planets if something happens to this one. We need to start proving to ourselves that we can do it." Scientific research is often a parade of analogues. NASA uses Antarctica and giant swimming pools as analogues for life in space; the International Space Sta-

tion is about to become an analogue for an interplanetary Noah's Ark.

A mustachioed fifty-four-year-old cosmonaut named Mikhail Kornien-ko will be the first to represent the Russians. The American is Scott Kelly.

e is Not a forMidable human specimen. Like fighter pilots and test pilots—both of which he has been—Kelly is fairly short. (Because of height restrictions on Soyuz, and because aerospace engineers are obsessed with

mass and volume, NASA won't consider astronaut applicants who stand taller than six foot three.) Five foot seven, 185 pounds on the ground—more like five foot nine, 170 after his year in space; "like a supermodel," he says—Kelly is coiled and capable of significant momentum, but he's also fifty years old. He shaves what's left of his hair with a blade. He has sometimes worn a mustache, but he doesn't anymore. He does wear glasses. (Astronauts do not need to have perfect vision, but it can't be worse than 20/100 uncorrected.) On formal occasions he'll wear his Navy uniform—he is a retired captain with more than 250 carrier landings to his credit—but





The giant
Soyuz rocket
rolling out on
its locomotive
toward the
launchpad at
the Baikonur
Cosmodrome
in Kazakhstan in
September.

Kelly mostly sports jeans and NASA-issued golf shirts. When he pulls into a place like Chelsea's, an astronaut hangout just down the road from the Johnson Space Center, and sits at a table with Cady Coleman and Mike Fossum, his fellow station veterans, they look like a group of teachers unwinding after school. You would never know by looking at them what they have done.

That's until Kelly makes the drive to Ellington Field and pulls on his blue flight suit and survival vest and walks toward a T-38 jet, white with a blue stripe and a NASA logo shining on its tail, a little like a man who knows he has the biggest balls in the room. Astronauts are required to spend a certain number of hours in T-38's each month to keep their flying, navigation, and troubleshooting skills sharp. Some days, Kelly hurtles across to Mobile or Little Rock and then pounds his way back home. On others, he loops through touch-and-goes, taking off and landing and taking off again. He peels into the sky and disappears into the brightness, announcing his return with the roar of his engines, and he whispers across the ground, the faintest of grazes, before he lifts back up where he belongs. To see Kelly in flight is to see a man transformed.

He was selected for this mission for several cold and rational reasons. NASA wanted a previous commander to take the critical first spot, and it wanted someone who had completed a six-month

expedition without any evident physical or mental fissures. NASA also wanted to send up an older astronaut, so the cosmic radiation he will absorb will have less time to turn into cancer before something else kills him. American astronauts are subject to strict exposure limits, the so-called red line they all fear, not because of the tumor risk but because they'll be grounded. Those limits were established in part using data culled from the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Kelly also has an identical twin brother, Mark, a retired astronaut and close-to-flawless genetic copy. By the end of Scott's mission, he will have spent exactly ten times as long in space as Mark, who has agreed to serve as a control in a series of detailed comparison studies, tracking everything from the microbiomes in their guts to the relative lengths of their telomeres, a sequence in our chromosomes that's believed to shorten with stress.

But mostly, Scott Kelly was chosen because of the stomach sense that he is, more than just about anybody else on earth, purposebuilt to fly. NASA's psychologists and psychiatrists look for two contradictory-seeming traits in its candidates for long-duration missions: adaptability and resiliency. The first represents an astronaut's tolerance for the chronic, low-level stress of being away—the confinement, the nearly constant white noise, the shitting into plastic bags. You yield in the fights you cannot win. The second indicates an astronaut's ability to withstand *acute* stress, usually associated with an unfortunate turn of events. You fight the fights



you must win. "Scott is highly adaptable and highly resilient," says Al Holland, a NASA psychologist who has tested him extensively. He is some rare combination of grit and give.

One barometer of an astronaut's adaptability is his feet. Many first-time astronauts, in their opening days and weeks of weightlessness, will cling to some facsimile of verticality: head up, feet down. It makes them look clumsy in their movements, like skiers

trying to push uphill. That's despite the clear messages being sent by their feet that the rules have changed. After about a month in orbit, astronauts begin sloughing off vast quantities of skin from their soles; it takes only that long for their bodies to decide that calluses, like bursa sacs, are biological ballast.

The results can be dramatic. Don Pettit, who has completed two long-duration missions on the station, filmed a crewmate taking off his socks against a black backdrop and a spotlight. It looked like a snow globe. One astronaut made a call to his flight surgeon after a thick wedge of his heel came floating off. "Should I be worried?" he asked Houston. After Kelly returned from his six-month mission, he remembers going for a massage and the woman gasping when she got to his feet. She said they were the softest feet she'd felt in her life.

Kelly's feet weren't really feet anymore. It wasn't just that he had been launching himself headfirst around the station, having discarded every last upright instinct. Because he had no longer needed his feet to be feet, he'd used them as hands. Rather than having

two arms and two legs, he'd had four equal limbs. Handrails became footrails. The calluses that he'd lost from the bottoms of his feet migrated to the tops, where he had hooked them around restraints like a trapeze swinger.

Given another year of pure flight, Kelly might evolve into human history's first true spaceman. Perhaps the migration of his callus-

es is just the beginning of his adaptation. We always depict aliens as some version of us. They won't look like us, because in space, even we stop looking like us. We become spiders that don't need webs.



ot everų part of the human body is so easily recast. NASA keeps a risk matrix, a list of thirty-two areas of ongoing physical concern. (Roscosmos has an entire division in Moscow, the Institute of Biomedical Problems, dedicated

to addressing them. The Russians usually abbreviate it to the Institute of Problems, because nearly every problem in space is a biomedical one.) Some former crises, like bone loss—studies showed that on long missions astronauts were losing as much as 2 percent of their bone mass per month—have been resolved with new exercise regimes and therapies. Others—like persistent sinus conges-

tion, a side effect of the same fluid shifts that lead to the loss of our blood reserves-have proved harder to remedy but seem relatively minor inconveniences. A sinister few continue to pose major obstacles to prolonged expeditions. One in particular didn't even present as a problem until the last year or two, and it risks making a trip to Mars impossible.

It's been dubbed Ocular Syndrome, or VIIP-Vision Impairment and Intracranial Pressure—so named after its possible cause. It was missed for all these years because most astronauts and cosmonauts are middle-aged, and they've reached that stage of life when they might be holding instructions a little farther from their faces to read anyway. But as the number of six-month missions on the station increased, more and more residents began experiencing startling changes to their vision. In one instance, it was so bad that NASA considered bringing the sufferer home.

Neither the Americans nor the Russians yet know the cause of Ocular Syndrome. The current hypothesis is that increased pressure in the brain—again, from fluid shifts—is damaging the retinas or optic nerves of certain people, though not all, for whatever equally unclear reason. The one-year missions will help NASA chart these changes and others like them beyond six months. Maybe the effects of weightlessness on the body level off or improve. Maybe they get exponentially worse. Maybe there is the real and terrifying prospect that by the time the first humans get to Mars or try to come home, they won't be able to see.

Although flight surgeons say only that further study is re-

Site No. 1. Kazakhstan: The gantry towers closing on the Soyuz rocket before launch.

quired, there is some evidence that Ocular Syndrome affects only men, and that if it affects them in only one eye, which it sometimes does, it will always take hold in their right eye. That might be a quirk of limited sample sizes;



far more men than women have been to space. Or it might prove the opening to some stunning revelation, an invitation to discover a fundamental difference in the human eye not only between men and women but also between the hemispheres of the brain.

We can't just choose to send women to Mars instead, because the women of Hiroshima and Nagasaki proved far more receptive hosts to cancer. At higher orbits, cosmic radiation is so intense, astronauts see fireworks through their sleeping masks; Scott Kelly could tell when he was between South America and Africa even with his eyes closed, because of the fiery presence of the South Atlantic Anomaly, where the inner Van Allen radiation belt bends closest to the earth.

If we don't give ourselves a better option than crews of blind men or radiation-sick women, then we won't survive Mars or its defenses. Getting there is only half the equation. Living and work-

> ing there, in one-third earth's gravityalready weak, light-headed, and sore, and now your blood and bursa sacs and feet adapting again—is the other. The most beautiful lure of interplanetary space is its demand that we first con-

асн шеек іи space, long-duration astronauts have private conferences with NASA's shrinks. Not even their flight surgeons can listen in. Together they work through a long mental-

health checklist: workload and habitability, family and personal relationships, mood and cognition. If the call is a videoconference, note will be made of the astronaut's appearance and mannerisms. The psychologists and psychiatrists are looking for the speed wobbles that can be the precursors of a larger crash. In Kelly's case, one of the measures of his orbital mood will be his sense of humor. He is deadpan and dry on the ground, and the working theory is that space makes you more of what you are. It is a compounding environment. If you are a man of faith here on earth, you will be devout above it. What concerns the shrinks is subtraction, anything that looks like lessening.

After his six months away, even Kelly, born flyer, was ready to land. "I've taken all my pictures," he said to Coleman, and his bags were packed well in advance. He's a scattershot sleeper on earth, and he gets less sleep in space, and it was beginning to tell on him. Residents on the station are each assigned private quarters, a soundproof box about the size of a phone booth; nobody underestimates the importance of having a door to close. Most astronauts strap sleeping bags on the wall and hang like bats, but Kelly often woke up in strange positions that took his sensory system time to parse. He missed resting his head on a pillow and never shook the desire to roll over, even though without pressure points, sides and backs become as meaningless in orbit as up and down. Some nights he kicked his way out of his bag in his sleep, his zombie arms stretched out in front of him, before he settled against what would have been a corner of his bedroom ceiling at home. He didn't remember many dreams while in space, but in the dreams he did, he was always on the ground.

At its essence, his one-year mission will be an exercise in absences and their mitigation. Before each trip, astronauts sit through a series of "contingency sims." They walk through what will happen if something bad occurs to them and what will happen if something bad occurs to someone they love, and they handpick their emissaries to gravity, the people assigned to call them in the event of an earthly emergency or, alternatively, to knock on their family's door in the middle of the night. No astronauts have lost children while in space, considered the worst of the possibilities to confront, but one learned his mother was killed in an accident. Regardless of the sim, none of them ends with an astronaut returning early. "That's something you need to understand before you leave," Kelly says. "There's no going home."

Buzz Aldrin once described bravery as a "gradual accumulation of discipline." Being able to leave comes in stages. Kelly has tried to occupy the doubtful parts of his brain with the countless small details of his departure. He has put all of his bills on automated payment. He noticed during a Russian class that his credit card is set to expire shortly after his launch; he will have to renew it early. He has updated his will. He hasn't yet reached the gratitude stage most astronauts pass through, when they take the time to savor last steaks or cold bottles

of beer, but he has started preparing for goodbye. "Six months is a huge commitment for any astronaut," his brother, Mark, says. "I think this is a lot more than just twice as hard."

Kelly is divorced, but his marriage produced two daughters: twenty-year-old Samantha, who recently moved back with him in Houston, and eleven-year-old Charlotte, who lives with her mother in Virginia. Kelly also has a longtime girlfriend, Amiko Kauderer, who works in NASA's public-affairs office and has two children of her own. He also has his widower father, Richard, who moved down from New Jersey to join his twin astronaut boys in Houston; Mark and his family; and a wide circle of friends. Kelly will stay connected with them while he is in orbit—there is Internet, a phone, and regularly scheduled videoconferences on iPads—but his six-month mission taught him that it isn't always enough. Amiko would go outside and record the sound of crickets or the rain to send him, but he is aware of the limitations of substitutes. As much as he loved weight-

lessness, some aches never went away.

This is really starting to hurt me, he wrote to Amiko one sleepless night. He had hit the three-quarter mark of his expedition, considered by the shrinks to be the hardest time: close enough to the end to see it, but not close enough to feel it. (This time around, Kelly will face a special test at the nine-month mark of his mission. Sarah Brightman, the soprano, will be arriving on the station as Russia's latest space tourist.) He began watching more TV, even though he rarely does on earth. Recordings of Houston Texans football games were important weekly benchmarks. He saved Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert for his daily workouts. He became obsessed with American Idol. "That's because Sam sings," Amiko says.

Over the last several months, Samantha has become one of his principal tethers. For years they were miles apart. After his former wife and daughters left for Virginia, Kelly lived an unattached man's life. When he went up for his six-month mission, he'd been dating Amiko for only a year. He gave up the apartment he was renting and trucked his stuff into storage. Upon reflection, that was a mistake. It left him too groundless. There is a cupola on the station, a half-diamond of flawless windows opening toward the earth. Studies have shown that astronauts are pulled into it mostly when they are passing over home. Kelly didn't have one. He has since moved into an immaculately kept new house with a yard and a pool, and it felt even more like home when Sam came back to him to start college, bringing her pets with her. She has a collection of tarantulas.



Kelly knows the longer he's away, the harder it becomes to remember. He will miss a year of Sam's and Charlotte's lives. What was once his finish line will soon be his halfway point. He recently decided to have a set of security cameras installed at his house; he

From left: Mark Kelly and his wife, former congresswoman Gabby Giffords; and Scott with his girlfriend, Amiko, in Las Vegas in 2013.

can monitor them online. Most of the cameras point outside. His phone chimes when his doorbell does, and he can check to see who's at the door. But one of them is inside, with a view of his

kitchen and living room. When he's back in orbit, he'll be able to drop into his sleeping bag with his laptop and see his couch, and his fridge, and his daughter and her family of surrogate spiders. He won't have to worry about remembering his dreams at all.

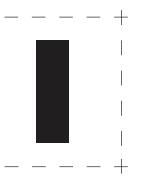
t шаѕ иеагlџ оие нииdred days into his six-month mission. Kelly is certain that it was a Saturday, because the rhythms on the station change on the weekends. With sixteen sunsets and

sunrises each day, and without seasons to measure the passage of time, it's considered psychologically beneficial for a workweek in space to mirror a workweek on earth.

Monday through Friday, each day is planned down to the minute, and crews are constantly chasing a line that moves through their schedules like a scanner: fifteen minutes to draw a blood sample; five minutes to tend to the experimental crop of red lettuce. Sunday is, in theory, a day of reflection and rest. Saturdays are something in between. There is work, but it's Saturday work: stocking the galley, vacuuming skin out of filters. On this particular Saturday, Kelly remembers that he was fixing the toilet again. He remembers, too, that he had the TV on in the background. It was on CNN.

He had just talked to Amiko on the phone. He had caught her at home, where she was indulging in her fully functional bathroom, taking a bath. She was shy to tell him where she was, but the now-strange sound of water splashing had bounced off the satellite between them

Just down the road, Mark Kelly was spending the day with his teenage daughters, Claire and Claudia. A thousand miles to the east in Virginia, Samantha and Charlotte Kelly were with their mother,



an hour deeper into their day. They were helping Sam's godmother move. A thousand miles to the west and an hour earlier in Tucson, Gabby Giffords, Mark Kelly's wife and Scott Kelly's sister-in-law, was meeting constituents in a supermarket parking lot. A twentytwo-year-old man whose name nobody knew approached her.

Back on the station, Kelly was burying himself in his work. He hadn't noticed that the TV feed had gone out. The signal is lost fairly routinely, whenever the station blunders into a gap in the Ku-band's coverage. Only a call from the ground finally broke his concentration. It was Houston. The CapCom told him that Peggy Whitson, a veteran astronaut and chief of the astronaut office, needed to talk to him. She would be on with him in five minutes.

Astronauts endure some long minutes, but those were some of Kelly's longest. During his contingency sims, he had asked that Whitson be his principal bearer of bad tidings. Now, on an otherwise uneventful Saturday, she wanted to talk to him. He felt heavier than he had in a hundred days. Maybe his grandmother had died, he thought. Maybe Sam had been in a car accident. He hadn't yet connected the black screen on the TV and the phone call. It hadn't dawned on him that the signal wasn't lost but cut.

Whitson came on the line. The conversation was made private. "I don't know how to tell you this," Whitson said, "so I'm just going to tell you: Your sister-in-law Gabby was shot."

The way gravity makes weightlessness hard to imagine, space can make life on earth seem like an illusion. When the sun is shining, even our biggest cities become washed out and invisible, swallowed by the vaster stretches of brown and green around them.

Vapor trails become clouds, and oil rigs become icebergs. It can be hard to believe that there are traffic jams and baseball games and border crossings down there. And it's next to impossible to comprehend that someone might have just shot your sister-in-law in the head in a supermarket parking

lot on a Saturday morning in Tucson.

Kelly told Whitson that he wanted to know everything, that she shouldn't seek to spare him. He wanted to feel what his family on the ground was feeling. He couldn't be with them physically, but he could be with them in every other way. He told his

crewmates what had happened, and he told them that he was going to be okay, but he was going to need to spend some time in his sleeping quarters.

Gennady Padalka, center, and Mikhail Kornienko, training at Star City outside Moscow last summer. Opposite: The thundering liftoff of Sovuz TMA-14M on September 26.

Kelly with



The first phone call he made was to his brother. Mark Kelly was still packing his bags in Houston, preparing to fly to Tucson. Over the coming hours and days, Scott made dozens more phone calls—to Mark, to Amiko, to his daughters. He worried that he was calling too much, that in trying to make up for not being there, he might have become too present. "No, it was actually really helpful," Mark says today.

In fact, "he was the rock, pretty much," Sam Kelly says. Because of his distance, his sense of disbelief dug in for longer than it stayed in the others, and maybe that's what allowed adaptation to turn into resiliency, as though he were the last of them with any hope that a different reality might be true.

President Obama announced that on Monday the nation would observe a moment of silence. Kelly would lead it from space, after he had said a few words. Just before he was scheduled to speak, he called Amiko. She was in Mission Control in Houston. He wasn't sure how long the moment of silence should be. She told him it should be as long as he wanted.

Kelly soon floated in front of the camera and onto the giant screens in front of her and everybody else. "Houston, Station, on Space-to-Ground One," he said.

"Yes, Station, this is Houston. Go ahead."

Kelly began by talking about his vantage point and how peaceful the planet looked in that instant from space, and how sharply what he saw diverged from what he knew. As he spoke, his voice grew harder through the crackle, a military man about to give an order. "We are better than this," he said. "We must do better." Then he asked for the moment of silence in honor of

> the victims of another one of those days when we did our worst. It was just long enough. He floated out of the camera's range, swimming back into his sleeping quarters. Amiko's phone soon rang beside her again.

> не оие place шнеге astronauts still leave our planet is the place where the first one did: Site No. 1 in the sprawling Baikonur Cosmodrome, carved out of the middle of the Kazakh desert. The launchpad was poured in

1955 under a veil of secrecy so thick—including mislabeled maps and a diversionary mining town also named Baikonur located hundreds of miles to the northeast-most of the men who built it didn't know what they were building. Sputnik was launched from it two years later. Four years after that, a star-crossed young Russian named Yuri Gagarin sailed into orbit from this Soviet monument to the invisible.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia leased the site from Kazakhstan; it is the last colony of a former empire. The pad is a wide, cracked concrete slab with train tracks embedded in it. The tracks end at an enormous hole framed by steel gantry towers. Underneath the pad, below that hole, a great crater has been dug out of the brown earth, vertigo-deep and wider than the pad itself. The Russians call the crater the otvod, which roughly translated means "getaway." In September, six months before he was scheduled to leave the earth for a year, Scott Kelly climbed down into that pit.

Officially, he was in Kazakhstan as a backup for an American named Barry "Butch" Wilmore, a crew-cut Tennessean with a wife and two young daughters who was about to launch to the $space\ station\ with\ two\ Russian\ crewmates\ as\ part\ of\ Expedition$ 41. If Wilmore had fallen in the shower or betrayed some previously undiscovered cavity in his nerve, Kelly would have taken his seat on Soyuz TMA-14M, and another American would have taken Kelly's place in history in March. Less formally, and more hopefully, Kelly was there to complete a dress rehearsal for his departure, another step in his gradual accumulation of discipline. He would do everything that he will do except go.

The Russians put much faith in patterns and their repetition, and part of their prelaunch ritual is that the backup crew clambers down into the *otvod* and inspects the bottom of the Soyuz FG on behalf of their captive colleagues, quarantined against prelaunch illness. Kelly was awed to look up at essentially the same collection of boosters that the Russians have employed since 1967. Two nights later, where he was standing would be filled with white-hot flame, but on that bright morning, in the silence and shadow, he was afforded a lung-emptying view. He wasn't looking up at a "bird" or a vessel or a ship. Soyuz, plainly and unmistakably, is a big fucking rocket.

Earlier that morning, at precisely seven o'clock-because that's when Gagarin's Vostok had been ferried to the pad, and so that's when every manned rocket the Russians have fired up since has begun its long journey into space-the rocket was pulled horizontally, business-end first, through a gaping maw in the side of Building 112 by a green locomotive. It can seem as though Russia's space program is a celebration of the past as much as it is a hedge against the future. There are constant reminders of who and what came before. As always, one of the locomotive's headlights had been put out; nobody seems to remember why anymore. A soldier with a sniffer dog walked the track ahead of it. Other soldiers with machine guns marched beside it. The track was aimed due east, toward a just-rising sun, its glow banking bright orange off clouds. In one of humanity's great pieces of theater, Soyuz rolled out into the light.

It was muscular and sleek in the thin morning air, the locomotive clanging and whistling ahead of it in wordless testimony to the evolution of our engines. It was more than 160 feet of power and restraint, of stages and modules, from its rhino's ass through its four gunmetal-gray boosters and its lathe-perfect middle, tapering to its gleaming white cap with its seamless hatch and, somewhere behind it, three seats, shaped more like cradles. When the locomotive stopped and the rocket sat still before a small crowd that could see its breath in the cold, it felt almost impossible that so much of this great and artful machine would be burned up and spent, except for its most essential parts, which would require only five hours and sixteen minutes to catch and dock with the station, orbiting at 17,500 miles an hour, somewhere up there. On some nights, if the mathematics and angles are right, you can see the light of the space station streak across the sky three minutes and sixteen seconds before the huge rocket lifts off like a greyhound chasing a mechanical rabbit. It can feel like too great a distance to close in so little time.

Mars can seem that way. Michael Suffredini believes that it's possible for one of us to stand on it by 2035, if the will is found and the right investments are made and we figure out a less diabolical way to



dissolve particulates in urine. That means it will probably take longer than he hopes. Whether we reach it in the lifetime of Scott Kelly is a function less of our ability than our desire. Mars never seems more remote than when we're putting bullets into congresswomen in parking lots. It never seems closer than when we're standing on the cracked concrete at Baikonur. The Kazakh desert already looks as though it belongs to another planet, barren except for conquering packs of wild dogs and herds of camels. "It's a good first step," Kelly says. It already feels so far from home.

At the Memorial Museum of Cosmonautics in Moscow, underneath a shining titanium monument of a rocket soaring into the sky, there is a black-and-white photograph of Yuri Gagarin as a boy. He was short because his family was poor and he was malnourished—it was wartime—but he was a beautiful boy. The photograph is there mostly for other children to see, mounted close to the floor, so that they might remember that this giant was once their size. When the Russians were more deeply invested in the hero-building business, they knew that children needed to believe that someone like them could grow up to be someone like him. Belief is the first of our gaps that needs [continued on page 166]

This page, on Alexis Ohanian:
Double-breasted wool suit (\$3,950), cotton shirt (\$600), and silk tie (\$215) by Louis Vuitton; steel Monaco chronograph (\$6,300) by TAG Heuer.
Opposite, on Cary Fukunaga: Two-button mohair jacket (\$3,060), mohair trousers (\$1,330), and leather shoes by Prada; cotton shirt (\$275) by Rag & Bone.

THIS ONE'S ON US

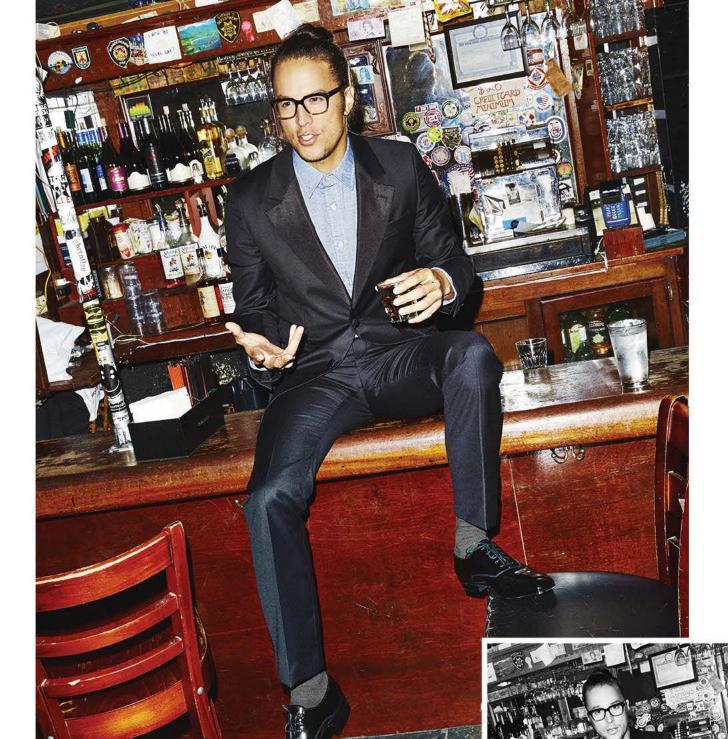
HERE'S TO A FEW GUYS WHO'VE HAD A GREAT YEAR—

VISIONARIES, HELL-RAISERS, AND BIG THINKERS who took a breather from their breakthrough year to join us at a few of

OUR FAVORITE BARS

TO CELEBRATE 2014 IN STYLE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY AARON RICHTER



CARY FUKUNAGA 37, DIRECTOR

HE'S DRINKING... Laphroaig 10 on the rocks.

TO... Directing all eight haunting episodes of True
Detective, winning an Emmy for his troubles,
and finishing principal photography on his next film,
Beasts of No Nation, starring Idris Elba.



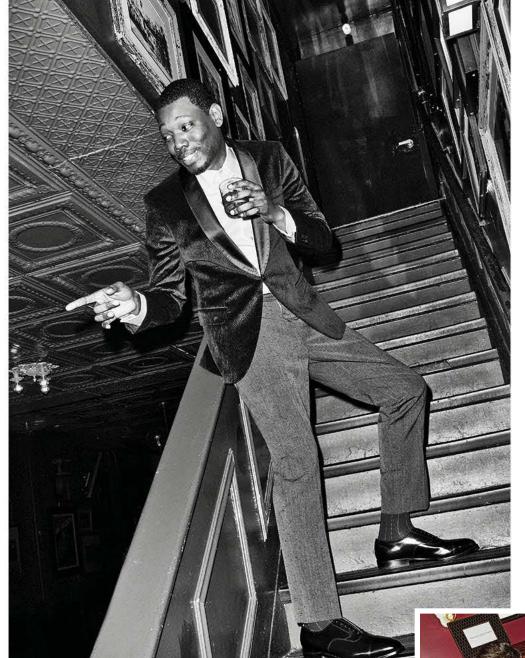
TO...Orchestrating the groundbreaking contemporary-art sale "If I Live I'll See You Tuesday" at Christie's auction house back in May. Gouzer's experimental approach—offering works by superstars, like Warhol and Koons, alongside pieces by emerging artists, with most at aggressively high prices—paid off, exceeding even the highest estimates.











JOST

∢∢ 32, WEEKEND UPDATER

HE'S DRINKING...An old-fashioned.

TO...Becoming the third employee in the history of Saturday Night Live to transition from head writer to the "Weekend Update" desk. (His two predecessors: Tina Fey and Seth Meyers. Who went on to do okay for themselves.)

MICHAEL CHE

◀31, WEEKEND UPDATER

HE'S DRINKING... A manhattan.
TO... Getting hired as a correspondent on *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* in June (dream job number one) and leaving, three months later, to join Jost as coanchor of "Weekend Update" (dream job number two).





heavies; fighting for a free and open Internet for all.



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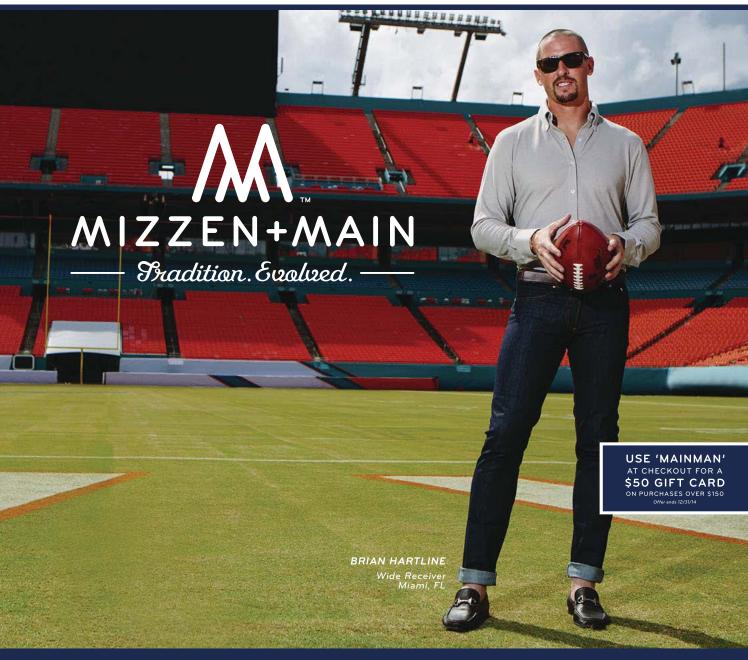
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Away

[continued from page 153] to be bridged.

A galaxy away in Baikonur, not far from the launchpad, two cottages sit among the desert's few trees. These are for grown-ups to visit. They are made of white plaster and green wood, with corrugated sheet metal for roofs. In one, Gagarin slept, apparently soundly, before his fateful launch. His small bed, neatly made, sits in the corner of one room, with a table and chairs and a record player. In the other cottage, Sergei Korolev worked more than he slept. He was Russia's preeminent rocket engineer and designer. He dreamt up Vostok and Soyuz here. In the Energia factory where the Soyuz capsule is assembled, a massive mural of his face is on the wall, with a quote: "The road to the stars is clear." In his office in his cottage, preserved like Gagarin's bedroom, there is a plain desk and a single wooden chair and a lamp. These were his instruments to overcome magnitudes.

Now, all these years later, Korolev's rocket inched its way down the tracks, taking more than two hours to cover the not quite five miles to Gagarin's pad. Then the locomotive's engineer reversed it up to the hole in the concrete. The rocket was made vertical by hydraulics and levers, and it became even more titanic upright than it had been on its side. Four weighted support arms were swung into position and placed against its hull. The train soon pulled away, and the rocket was left suspended over the otvod as though by magic. When the American shuttle was on its pad, it was pinned to the ground by a series of explosive bolts, showy and pyrotechnic and one more thing that could go wrong. The Russians rely on Korolev's more ancient and simple physics. The rocket waits, held in place only by those four delicate arms, which act the way flying buttresses hold up a Gothic cathedral's soaring ceiling, gravity made to work against itself, weakness turned into strength. Soyuz can float on its pad only because it is so heavy.

Later, two bearded Russian orthodox priests would visit it, their black robes whipping around them like flags. They chanted and sang baritone hymns in Soyuz's shadow and waved a cross and threw holy water at it. That was after Kelly had dropped down into the getaway to stare up at the bottom of it, six months before he would strap into a cradle at its top. Twice graced, by Russian mysticism and American marvel, that big fucking rocket was deemed ready for launch.

Kelly has never thrown up in space, but when he came back to earth last time, he had gravity sickness. The muscles that held up his head hurt. His spine was painfully compressed. He didn't smash coffee mugs like so many of his colleagues, letting go of them in midair and expecting them to float, but he did try to kick himself to his bathroom one

night and couldn't figure out why he wasn't flying out of his bed.

For every day they spend in space, astronauts can expect to need a day on the ground to return to some version of their former selves. By that measure, Kelly is about to spend two years away. In the quiet before his departure, he answered a question about whether his time in orbit had changed him in more fundamental ways than the redistribution of his calluses. Whether he and his insides were something they weren't before.

"No," he said.

Not everybody who knows him agrees. Before their six-month mission together, Cady Coleman had been a little leery of being his crewmate for such a long time. They could be stony with each other on the ground. He was sometimes too blunt, she thought, oblivious to the needs and feelings of others. She played the flute and was more finely tuned. "There couldn't be people who are more different than Scott and me," she says today. "I know there are things he didn't see."

With the soles of his feet stripped, he was forced to take lighter steps. She was taken by how gentle and kind he was in orbit, how measured he was in how he moved and spoke. "Somehow the imperatives are just more clear up there," Coleman says. Their time in space didn't align exactly; she came down after him. She was shocked to find him waiting for her when she landed.

Samantha Kelly saw changes in her father, too. In the six months before he went into space, they hadn't been easy on each other. The breakup of their family had done the damage that all breakups do, and the distance between Texas and Virginia had made it harder for them to repair it. Now they are back under the same roof. They listen to each other. He is more demonstrative in his love.

In their first days back together the last time, father and daughter retreated to a friend's pool. "You have no idea how good this feels," he said to her as they sat with the sun warm on their faces. The way he said it struck her.

"I noticed him being more appreciative of everything," she says. "I don't know if he ever knew this about himself, but prior to it— I think he was grateful, but he didn't really express it a lot. He's more positive. When I make him a peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich, he looks at me like I made him a four-course meal."

Amiko Kauderer talks about those six months her new boyfriend was away as though each were a forge that shaped and strengthened their bond. "We already shared so much, but the launch was when we really kicked off," she says.

They didn't talk every day at first, but they came to speak most days, and more and more when he began to struggle with the lengths of silence. "We did this together," she says. They were leveled by his time in space, the astronaut and the small-town Texas girl who works on the ground on behalf of peo-





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<u>Away</u>

ple like him. Now each weighed as much as the other. For the first time in their relationship, there were ebbs and flows in their dependency. Space had made it harder to tell who had needed saving and who had come to the rescue.

In Kazakhstan, Kelly helped Butch Wilmore navigate his farewell to earth. Kelly knew that his last pillow would be one in the Cosmonaut Hotel, where they spend their quarantine; he knew that his last meal with knives and forks would be plates of cured meat and pies with fruit for dessert; he knew that his last goodbyes to the people he loved would be made through glass.

There is always a final press conference at which the three members of the prime crew and their three reserves sit in a row, speaking with microphones to a crowd of family and friends and reporters from behind germproof windows. This time, once it was over and the crowd had moved outside, Kelly suddenly appeared in the sunshine. He told Mike Fossum, in Baikonur as an extra set of astronaut shoulders, to find Wilmore's shy blond wife, Deanna. Fossum, who had completed a long-duration flight in 2011, understood. Kelly had smuggled Wilmore outside, in the cover of a distant stand of trees. Fossum soon brought over Deanna. Kelly and Fossum went on lookout, turning their backs on the moment they had created. For a free minute or two, husband and wife, though careful not to touch, shared the air and each other, the last time they would be alone together for six months.

Two nights later, in the early-morning blackness, Wilmore and his Russian crewmates waved through bus windows one last time, their alien Sokol suits made phosphorescent by the flashes of cameras. The way it always is, an old Russian rock song by a band named Zemlyane-Earthlings-about going into space and missing grass had been played for them over speakers. They went to their rocket. Their families headed for a stretch of desert just a mile from the pad; the Russians believe in proximity. The Wilmores did their best to hide their tension with their smiles. They didn't succeed.

So much effort and hope had come down to these last tugs of gravity, the rocket turned white with a thick blanket of frost, clouds of steam belching out of and up its groaning sides. Once it was pumped full with liquid oxygen and kerosene, it had become a living thing with impulses and desires of its own. Shuttle launches had felt less predetermined and inevitable; they were so often scrubbed late because of a rainstorm at one of the emergency-landing sites in Spain or some small mechanical failure. The shuttle was built with so many outs, liftoff never felt certain until it was. Soyuz leaves no room for alternatives. It is never late, and it is never scrubbed. If you are strapped into one of its seats, you are about to be launched out the other side

of the sky.

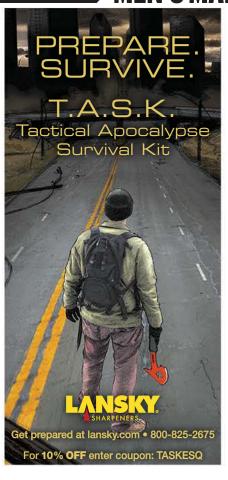
And then the fire was lit, and it filled the getaway and spilled over its banks like a river in flood, those four arms capitulating to the surge and swinging clear. The fire pushed down in a thickening stream, and the rocket lifted off, the sound of its engines taking longer to reach Deanna and her girls than the light, but now it rolled across the sand in a wave, not a rumble but a crack, a thunderclap in their chests. Soyuz somehow found in itself more speed, and within seconds it was truer to say that it had left than it was leaving. It reached into the night like a flare, the desert illuminated in its wake, and when it neared the clouds, the fire lit its way forward, too. Korolev was right, and then he was right again: The road really is clear. Now the earth had a ceiling as well as a floor, and the rocket burst through it, leaving concentric circles of eerie light. On and up it went, disappearing except for the last of its noise, until it faded out, leaving the early morning dark and quiet again. The Wilmores, exhausted and tearful and joyous, cheered and hugged and turned to make their way to the bus that would start them on their way home. Before they had collapsed into their seats, their husband and father was weightless. Only eight minutes and counting, and he was long gone.

After. Kelly resumed his own countdown, T minus one hundred and eightythree days. There are American astronauts for whom a year in space would pass as quickly as a dream. They are more curious than him, more inventive, less tied to earth and their girlfriends and their daughters. But he's the right astronaut for this trial expedition because the right astronaut for the real one will be someone just like him. Kelly is the analogue for the beautiful boy out there who has the notion but not yet the evidence that he will be our first Martian. He will likely be a man and by then middleaged, because he will need to be cancer resistant, and he will have armored eyes, because he will need to be able to see, and he will be a pilot, because he will need to know how to fly, and he will be military, because he will need to give and follow orders.

"If someone asks you to do something, especially if it's hard, you shouldn't say no," Kelly says.

But going to Mars will be so much more than a function of obedience and strength. It will take more than making an engine powerful enough or a descent module responsive enough or the rest of the machine and its crew durable enough. None of us has ever looked out a window and seen the earth as just another light in the sky. We can't know what that will do to us until one of us does it. So our beautiful boy will also be doubtful, because he will need to be subject to change, and he will be reticent, because he will need to be incapable of lies, and he will be in love, because we will need him to come back home. 19

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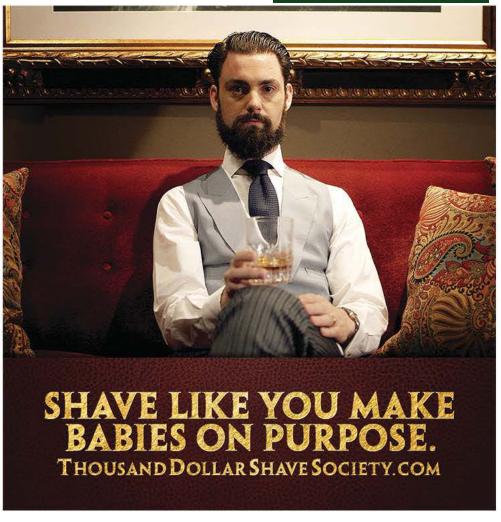
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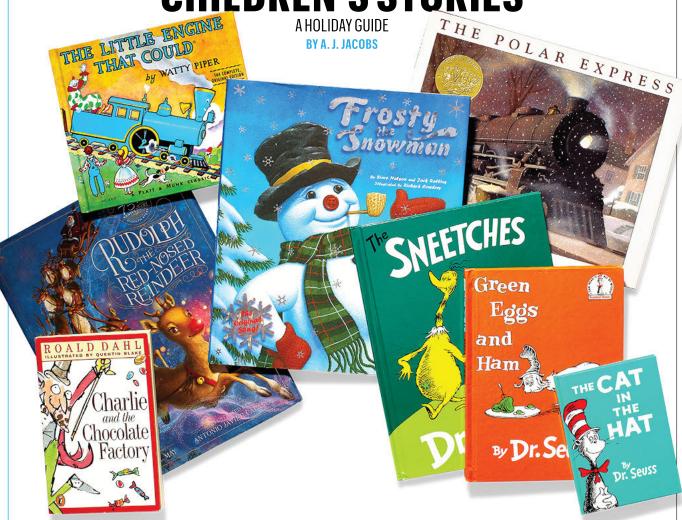
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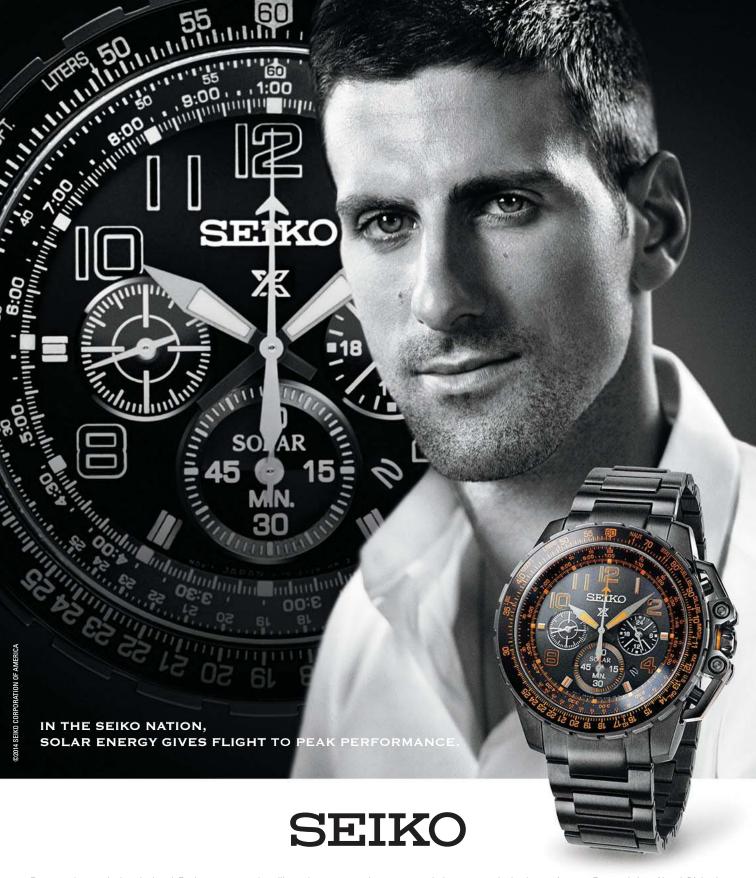
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